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a Christmas present from Gandona to Lilly. 1875

CHATS

WITH

THE LITTLE ONES.

FROM THE FRENCH OF

L. SAUVEUR, Ph.D., LL.D.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY J. M. D., AND BY F. T. MERRILL.

ENGRAVED BY JOHN ANDREW & SON.

BOSTON:
ESTES AND LAURIAT.
1876.

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PREFACE.

THE "Causeries avec les Enfants," by Dr. L. Sauveur, from which the greater part of this little book is taken, is dedicated "Aux Mères et aux Enfants."* I offer the translation also to mothers and children, feeling confident that the many little ones who do not understand French, will find as much pleasure in reading the following stories or in hearing them read, as their more fortunate companions. I say more fortunate, for they are indeed happy who are able to read Dr. Sauveur's own words. No pen, however brilliant, can keep in a translation the sprightliness and force of the orig-The difference in the languages will not permit it. The frequent repetitions which give brilliancy to a French conversation, would be stale and utterly devoid of meaning in English.

Dr. Sauveur imagines himself teaching a class of eight little children. His lessons are familiar talks with them on different topics suited to their present

^{*} To Mothers and Children.

powers, while he constantly aims to assist in their higher development. The following translation of a portion of his preface to the "Causeries avec les Enfants," will show the design of the book.

"Not for a moment have I forgotten that this book is intended for children, and also for mothers who wish themselves to teach the French language to their little ones.

"The conversation in the 'Causeries avec les Enfants,' is easy and carefully graduated. This method of teaching is founded on the principle that we should go from the known to the unknown, new words being suggested to the child by those already understood. . . . The greatest attention has been paid to the adaptation of this theory in the present work. . . .

"The subjects treated in the book are simple, and in no way beyond the intelligence of little children. Their age, however, does not forbid the use of poetry. Is it, indeed, possible anywhere to find more true poetry than in the souls of the little ones in our midst? They have sensitiveness greater than ours in the sphere of their intelligence, and an ardent longing for occupation and amusement. I have therefore spoken to their hearts, throwing into the conversations flowers that will easily blossom in the mind."

I have kept the idea of the school-room, where the children are supposed to meet day after day to recite and converse with their teacher, who leads them on by a series of conversations from one idea to another, thus forming an unbroken chain from the first chapter to the last. If in some instances I should seem more explicit than would apparently be necessary to American readers, it has been from the fear of breaking the perfect chain, which is the charm of the book. I have also in many cases been abrupt in introducing subjects widely apart from the topic of the hour. This in the original is done to explain some French word that the children do not yet understand, and it could not be wholly omitted without destroying the harmony of the chapter.

While I have endeavored to express, as nearly as possible, the same ideas in English as in the French of Dr. Sauveur, I have carefully avoided a literal translation. Many of the anecdotes and several complete chapters are taken from the "Petites Causeries," some of the former replacing conversations in the "Causeries avec les Enfants," which are useful only to explain French words, and have no interest for an American reader. This mingling of the two books makes it impossible to use the English one as a key to either of the French originals; a possibility I have diligently studied to avoid, as it would be utterly contrary to Dr. Sauveur's system of teaching.

This book, therefore, is independent in itself. It is hoped that it will be useful in two ways: as a pleasant story-book for mothers to read to their children, or for children who are old enough to read by themselves; and as a reading-book in schools for our little ones. The books employed in such schools

have, too often, little interest, containing words rather than ideas. The conversations in the following chapters, while extremely simple in themselves, open the way to more advanced thought, enabling the teacher to expand the ideas, according to his or her judgment.

In the fables of La Fontaine, I have made use of the excellent versions of ELIZUR WRIGHT, Jr. I am indebted to Miss Harrier W. Preston for the admirable rendering of the other poetry, which loses none of its charm in her delightful translation.

E. H. B.

Boston, November 1, 1875.

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I.

EIGHT LITTLE CHILDREN.

GOOD morning, children. It is a pleasant sight to see you all so bright and happy. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven. eight little children. Let us count together.

One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight. We count eight little children.

That is right. Now tell me your names, my dears. What is your name, my boy?

George.

What is yours, my little girl?

-1

A

Alice.

Tell me all your names.

Mary, Louise, Grace, Caroline, Arthur, —

And you, little one?—You are Benjamin, the smallest of all the children. How many little boys are there?

Three.

And how many little girls?

Five.

George, add together five little girls and three little boys. How many are five and three?

Eight.

That is right. How many are two and two? Four.

Answer, all together. How many are two and two?

Four.

Imitate me and say Two and two are four. How many are three and two?

Three and two are five.

How many are four and three?

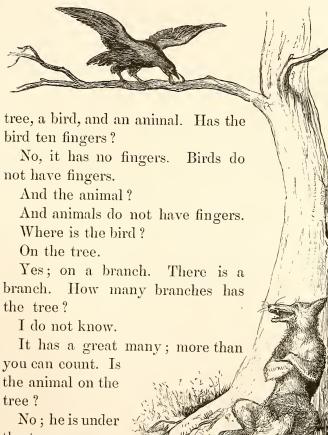
Four and three are seven.

Attention, children. I hold up one finger. There is one finger. Look, there are two fingers; there are three fingers. Count all the fingers together.

One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten.

How many fingers have you? We have ten fingers.

Look at this picture, children. There is a



the tree.

Yes; at the foot of the tree. Can you see the animal's feet, Arthur?

Yes.

How many has he?

He has four.

The bird has four also.

Oh, no; it has but two.

Is it a quadruped or a biped?

A biped.

And you?

I am a little boy.

What are you looking at, little girls?

We are looking at the picture.

What is the animal looking at?

He is looking at the bird.

Yes, he is looking up. — See how I point. I am pointing up. The bird is looking down. Do you know the name of the animal that is leaning against the tree?

Yes, it is a fox; and the bird is a raven.

What is the raven looking at?

It is looking at the fox.

Is it looking up?

No, it is looking down.

There is the raven's bill. Do you see any thing in its bill?

Yes.

What is it?

We do not know.

It is a piece of cheese. He likes cheese. Does the fox like cheese?

Yes.

But he has none, and wants the piece the raven has. Listen, and I will tell you a little fable about it.

A raven is quietly perched on a tree, holding a piece of cheese in his bill. A fox sitting at the foot of the tree, looks at the raven's cheese and wishes he had it. But how will he get it! He looks up, makes a polite bow to the bird and says, "What beautiful plumage you have! you are the most charming bird of the forest." The raven, greatly flattered by the compliment, looks down upon the fox, pleased and happy. The flatterer continues, "Will you not sing a little for me, that I may hear your sweet voice? For I am sure you are the very king of the birds." The raven, duped by this flattery, opens his bill and utters a loud shriek. The cheese falls to the ground. The cunning fox seizes it and runs away.

Do you like this fox, my children?

No.

You are right, for he is a flatterer. Does he admire the raven's plumage?

No.

And his voice?

No, indeed.

But he says that he does.

Yes; but he is deceitful and tells a falsehood.

True. Never be deceitful, my dear children; always speak the truth. Who is the dupe in our fable?

The raven.

Does he believe that he is beautiful?

Yes.

And that he has a sweet voice?

Yes.

Is he vain?

Very.

But he is punished for his vanity. My little friends, never become flatterers like the fox, or vain like the rayen.

Imitate me, children, and rise. — Seat your-selves. — Rise again, and come to me. Give me your hand, Mary, and you too, George. All give me your hands. There they are, all the little hands together. Now make a polite bow, and say, Good morning.

Good morning.

The lesson is finished. Good morning, my children.



11.

THE BALL AND THE HANDS.

R ISE, George, and come this way. March! March towards me. — That is right. Give me your hand. — Look, children, I take George's hand in mine. You have something in your pocket, George. Is it an orange?

No.

Ah! here it is. I have it. It is a ball. Very well; let us play with the ball. I throw it in the air. — One, two, three! There is the ball in the air. Where is it, children?

In the air.

Come here, Louise. Take the ball and throw it.

One, two, three! there it goes!

Very well; try again.

One, two, three!

I have caught it; here it is in my hand. Return to your place and be seated, little one. Arthur, come and throw the ball.

Here it goes! One, two, three!

Catch it.

I eatch it.

Is the ball in the air?

No; it is in my hand.

Give it to me, Arthur. Is it in your hand now?

No; it is in your hand.

Hold up one hand, Grace. — Hold up two hands. — How many hands have you?

I have two hands.

There is the table. Has it two hands?

No.

Has it ten fingers?

No, indeed. It has neither fingers nor hands. Look out of the window, children. There is

a horse in the street; has it any hands?

No.

And the ox?

No.

No; neither the horse nor the ox has any hands. Have they any fingers?

No; animals have neither hands nor fingers.

Have they a head?

Oh, yes.

Do they speak English?

No, indeed.

Are they intelligent?

No.

What! Is not the dog intelligent?

Oh yes, very.

And the cat?

The cat also. We have a very intelligent cat, and I would like to tell you a story about her.

We should be delighted to hear it, Alice.

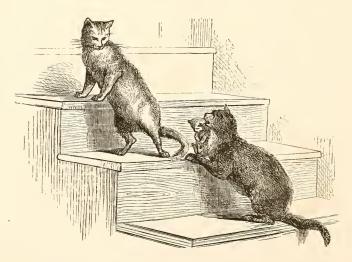
Puss had always lived in the cellar with her three kittens; but one day she thought she would carry them up into the attic. The servant did not think that was the place for them, so carried them back to the cellar. Puss was very strong in her idea about it, and did not wish to be interfered with. She carried them again and again to the attic, three, four, five times, ten times; for each time the servant brought them back to the cellar. Poor Puss was nearly tired to death, and could carry them no longer. Suddenly she left the house. Where do you think she went?

I cannot imagine, my dear.

She was gone an hour; then came back with a great black cat that we had never seen before. She showed him her kittens, and explained the whole affair.

She explained to him?

I suppose so, for the strange cat took the little kittens one by one, and carried them to the attic. When he had finished, he disappeared, and we have never seen him since.



That is a very good story, Alice. The great black cat was the friend of your puss. Puss told him her trouble, and he instantly came to her relief. Do you not see that cats are intelligent, and good to each other? Oh, we think a great deal of our puss.

She merits your affection, little one. Now let us play with the ball again. Come here, Caroline; take the ball and throw it up in the air.

One, two, three! See how high it goes.

Catch it. — Ah! you missed it; there it is on the floor. Return to your place, my dear, and be seated.



III.

THE BALL, THE ORANGE, AND THE APPLE.

THERE is an orange and an apple. The orange is a kind of fruit; is it not?

Yes.

And the apple?

The apple also.

Yes, they are excellent kinds of fruit, and I am very fond of both. Do you like fruit, George?

Yes, very much.

Which do you prefer, — apples or oranges?

Oranges.

And you, Grace?

I prefer apples.

Here is an apple in my hand. I throw it in the air and catch it again. Look! I throw it on the floor. Where is it, Louise?

On the floor.

I pick it up. Where is it now?

In your hand.

No; look carefully. Where is it?

It is on your hand.

That is right. Have you your ball, George? Yes.

Throw it to me. — I have it. Now look out and catch it when I throw it back. One, two, three! Ah! you missed it, my boy; there it goes on the floor. Pick it up, and give it to your right-hand neighbor. Benjamin is your right-hand neighbor. Give it to him. Where is the apple?

On the table.

And the orange?

That is on the table, too.

Benjamin, come and put the ball on the table. Right, my boy; return to your place. Caroline, I roll the orange on the floor towards you: One, two, three! Catch it.

I have it.

Now roll it to me.

I roll it. — There it is!

Yes; I catch it and roll it back again. Where is the orange now?

I have it.

Show it to me, Caroline.

There it is.

Go and put it on the table, then come and sit on my lap. I am going to tell you a little fable, children.

Oh! that will be nice.

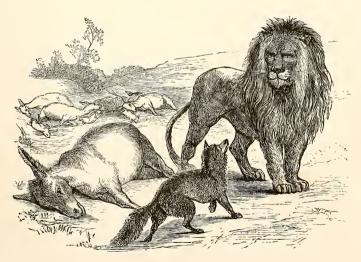
You have heard of the lion, the fox, and the donkey?

Yes; the two first are wild animals, and the last is a very stupid one.

Now listen, every one.

The lion, the fox, and the donkey started off on a hunting excursion. They travelled together peacefully, like gay and happy companions. The lion walked along majestically, like a king. The donkey held up his long ears, and brayed with all his might; and the fox went jumping around and bounding about his majesty. The three hunters were very successful. They caught many stags, hinds, hares, and rabbits. Gathering them together, the lion turned to the donkey and said, "Divide the game." The

donkey was simple, honest, and just. He divided it into three equal parts, and said to the king and the fox, "Choose for yourselves." The lion was angry, and killed him immediately. "Divide the game," he said to the fox. The fox, making a heap of all the game, and placing the body of the donkey on the top, made a bow to the prince, saying, "There is your share, Sire." The lion was delighted. "My dear friend," he said, "who taught you to divide so well?"—" The fate of the donkey taught me," answered the cunning fox.



What is the moral of the fable, children? The donkey should not have gone with the lion.

True, Arthur; the lion was too strong for the donkey, and had no respect for justice; and what else?

One must imitate the fox, and give all to the most powerful.

That is a sad lesson. Was not the donkey perfectly just?

Yes, indeed.

Then why was the lion angry?

Because he was selfish and unjust.

Did the fox revenge his comrade's death?

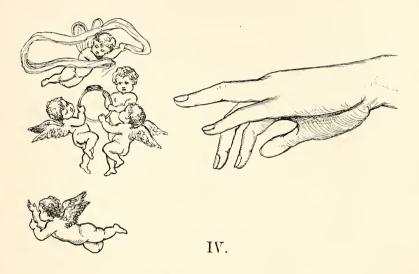
No.

Why not?

He was not strong enough to attack the lion.

No, my children; and so it is among men. Some are strong and powerful, but unjust; others are weak, but honest. The weak are sacrificed like the donkey to the interests of the strong; or, like the fox, live by flattery and deceitfulness. But would it not have been better if the fox had called together all his friends and those of the donkey, and marched against the lion?

Yes, indeed. For such a wicked, selfish animal deserved to be killed.



THE THUMB AND THE FINGERS.

THERE is the thumb; there is the forefinger, and there is the little finger. All hold up your forefingers. How many forefingers have you?

Two.

The forefinger is near the thumb. Arthur sits near Benjamin. Is the little finger near the thumb, George?

No; it is the farthest from the thumb.

Right, my boy. Alice, come here and give me your hand.

There is my hand.

And there is your third finger, my dear. Ah, what a pretty ring you have! See, children, see Alice's pretty ring. Have you a ring, George?

No.

No; little boys do not wear rings. But you have a third finger, have you not?

Oh! yes.

Where is it?

Near the little finger.

Where is the middle finger?

Between the forefinger and the third finger.

And where are you, Louise?

I am between Mary and Alice.

Where is the thumb?

The thumb is near the forefinger.

Is the little finger as large as the thumb?

No: it is smaller.

Right. Here are two balls, one large and one small. I throw the large one to Grace, and the small one to Caroline. — Ah! Caroline, you did not catch it. It has rolled near Mary's feet. How many feet has Mary?

She has two feet.

How many feet has a horse?

Four.

And an ox?

Four also.

Yes, the horse and the ox are quadrupeds. Arthur and Benjamin, rise and stand by the side of each other. Is Benjamin as tall as Arthur?

No, he is shorter.

Are you tall, Arthur?

Yes.

As tall as I?

No.

No; my head is far above yours. See, children, Arthur's head is hardly above my waist. Am I taller than he?

Oh, much taller.

Is the thumb longer than the middle finger? No, it is shorter.

Yes; the middle finger is longer than the thumb, the forefinger, the third finger, and the little finger. It is the longest of all the fingers. Caroline, who is the tallest of all the children?

— You do not answer. Is Arthur taller than George?

Yes.

Is he taller than the little girls?

Yes.

Is he very tall? as tall as I?

No.

No; he is not as tall as I, but he is the tallest of all the children.

Will you not tell us another story to-day? Would you like to have me? Oh, yes.

Very well. I will tell you one a friend told me the other day, which is similar to Alice's story about her puss; only the hero is a dog instead of a cat.

We are all listening.

My friend was absent in Europe three years. While he was away, he left his house and two fine dogs in his brother's care. When he returned to his house, one of his dogs rushed to meet him, jumping about him and barking, wild with joy at seeing him again. All at once his friendly demonstrations ceased, and he appeared thoughtful; suddenly he leaped towards the door and disappeared. — You asked me, Alice, where I thought your puss went when she left the house. Can you tell me what became of my friend's dog? Was he tired of caressing his master?

No, indeed. If you will tell me where the other dog was, I will tell you where this one went.

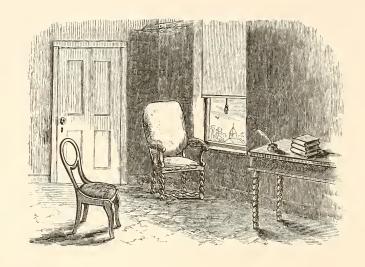
How, Alice?

He was not selfish, he thought of his companion.

You are right, my dear. He went to the

woods at the back of the house, where his comrade, lying in the shadow of the great elms, was thinking no doubt of his master and regretting his long absence. He quickly told him the good news, and they were soon bounding back to the house side by side, eager to show their joy at seeing their master again.





V.

THE SCHOOL-ROOM.

GOOD morning, children. Here we are again in the school-room. Are you all here?

Yes.

Very well! Let us examine the room a little, and look at the different things about us. How many doors are there?

One, two.

Yes; the hall door and the dressing-room door. I open the hall door. Is the dressing-room door open, George?

No; it is closed.

Open it.

It is open.

Show me your right hand, Grace. Is it open or closed?

It is open.

Open your eyes, children, and look at the windows. How many windows are there?

Three.

Are they open?

No; they are closed.

Look! There are the shades. I raise them and lower them. Lower your eyes, George, and look at the floor. Do you like to keep your eyes down?

No.

Very well; raise them and look at the ceiling. I do not like that any better.

No? Then turn your head to the right, and tell me what you see.

I see the hall door and the little girls.

Close the door, my boy; now turn your head to the left. What are you looking at?

I am looking at the window, — no, I am looking at the shade.

Will you go to the window and raise the shade?

With pleasure.

Thank you. Return to your place and be seated. Are you standing, Mary?

No; I am seated.

Where? on the table?

No; on a chair.

Is your chair the same as mine?

No; mine has no arms.

You are sitting in a small chair, and I am in an arm-chair. There is the carpet. What is under the carpet?

The floor.

Can we see the floor?

No.

Why not?

Because it is under the carpet.

Grace, come here, near the table. There are many different objects on the table. Take one of them.

I have something.

What is it?

A book.

How many books are there on the table?

One, two, three.

Put the book back again, and take something else.

I have a paper-cutter.

We use the paper-cutter to cut the leaves of a book. Here is a knife with four blades. I open one of them. Look! there is the point, the edge, and the back. The back does not cut; but I can sharpen this pencil with the edge. Do you see? The point pricks like a pin. Here also is an inkstand and a pen. I dip the pen in the ink and write Caroline on this sheet of paper. I will write George with a pencil. Come here, George, and erase your name. Can you erase it with your finger?

No.

No, you cannot. Take this piece of rubber. Can you erase it now?

Yes.

Rub, rub hard, my boy; it is not yet erased.

— That will do. It is quite rubbed out. Caroline, come and erase your name. Take this rubber. — You refuse it?

Yes; because I cannot erase ink with rubber. You are right. What will you use?

The ink-eraser.

Yes; but do not rub too hard. — See! you have torn the paper.

Oh! I am very sorry.

Never mind, little one; but be more careful another time. Here is a piece of chalk. What do we do with it?

We write on the black-board.

Is the chalk black?

No; it is white.

True, and the black-board is black. I take the chalk and write on the black-board the figures 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. Read them with me: One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten. George, point out the figures two, four, six. Repeat them. — That is right. I will write all the figures up to one hundred. Read them together. — Very well. Now look at the room. Is it round or square?

Square.

Is it light or dark?

Light.

What makes it light?

The sun.

Yes. The sun shines through our windows, making it bright and pleasant. Do you see its brilliant lustre above our heads?

Yes; but it is so dazzling we cannot look at it.

Does the sun light our room at night? Oh, no.

Arthur, stand on this chair, and take this match.

What for?

Light it.

I do not know how.

Look! I rub it on this box and light it. Now hold it, and I will turn on the gas.

Oh! Oh!

What is the matter?

Oh, my finger!

Foolish boy! you have burned your finger. Why did you not drop the match? Try again. Take the box and light the match; now hold it carefully. — That is it, my boy. The gas is lighted. Jump down and take your seat. Does the gas light the room?

No, not at all.

Why not?

Because the sun is too bright.

Yes; the sunlight is much brighter than that of the gas. Which do you prefer,—the light of the sun or of the gas?

We prefer the sunlight.

But at night, when the sun leaves the earth in darkness and obscurity, we are very glad to have the gas; are we not?

Yes, indeed!

Very well, children, we will not talk any more to-day. You may run out and play in the warm, bright sunlight.





VI.

TWO LITTLE FABLES.

LOOK at this picture, children, and you will see a cock eating barley, and a pearl lying on the ground behind him. Do you know what a pearl is?

Yes; it is a precious jewel.

Listen, and I will tell you one of Æsop's fables, a very short one.

One day, as a cock was scratching in the ground in search of food, he found a pearl.

"Oh!" he said, throwing it away; "you are very fine, no doubt; but I would rather have a grain of barley than all the pearls in the world."

Do you understand this little fable?

Yes; the cock did not care for the pearl, because he could not eat it.

Could he eat a grain of barley?

Oh, yes.

A grain of barley is excellent food for a cock, is it not?

Yes, excellent.

Which would you prefer, George,—a pearl or a grain of barley?

I should prefer a pearl.

Of course you would; a pearl is more precious than a grain of barley. But the cock did not value the pearl. Was he right to prefer the grain of barley?

Yes, he was right. But would you not prefer the pearl?

Yes, George; because I know its value, like you. Here is another little fable. I will read it first, and I wish you to be very attentive.

THE DONKEY AND THE CHILD.

A child set out for school one day, Luncheon in hand, and on the way Met, in a space of open ground,
A poor old ass with pannier bound;
And such a piteous air, the boy
Tendered the beast his bread with joy.
Whereupon, lifting up his head:
Hihan! hihan! the donkey said.
The child was wonder-struck. "Mamma," said he,
"Would like him well, he thanks so prettily!"

Now read it together. Raise your voices and speak distinctly. — That is very well. For your lesson to-morrow, you will learn it by heart.

What do you mean?

When you are here to-morrow, you will close your books and recite the fable. Do you understand?

Oh, yes.

That will be reciting it by heart. Do you know where your heart is, George?

Yes; I put my hand on it.

Do you feel it beat?

Yes; it beats under my hand.

Is the heart on the right or on the left side? It is on the left side.

I see you know very well where it is. You have a large, generous heart, my boy, and it is full of love for your mother and father, and all your little playmates.

And for you, too.

Thank you, George; I hope so. To-morrow, after you have recited the fable, you will all go to the black-board and write it.

With the book?

No; you will put your books on the table, and will write from memory.

Oh, we never can do that.

If you study carefully the spelling of every word and syllable, you will be able to write quite easily. Did the little boy's mother see him give the bread to the donkey?

No.

If she had, she would have been pleased; would she not?

Yes; and she would have liked the donkey very much. "Mamma," said he, "would like him well."

Why would the little boy's mother have liked him, Alice?

Because he said thanks so prettily.

Was the donkey polite?

Yes, very polite.

How do you know?

Because he said, "Thank you."

Imitate the donkey in the fable, children, and always be polite. Thank every one who gives you any thing, or does any thing for you.

George, there is Mary's handkerchief on the floor near her feet. Pick it up and give it to her.

I pick up the pretty white handkerchief, make a bow to Miss Mary, and present it to her.

Thank you, George.

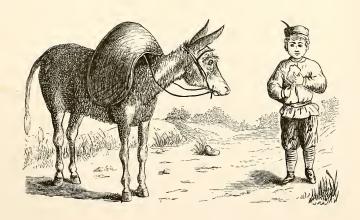
Bravo! my children. You are very polite, more so than the donkey.

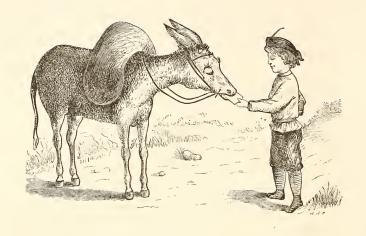
Yes; because the donkey did not make a bow.

True, George; and he did not say *Miss*. If the donkey were here, we could teach him a lesson in politeness.

Yes; of true politeness.

That will do, children. The lesson is finished.





VII.

THE RECITATION BY HEART.

A RE you all here, children, with your books? Yes, we are all here.

Do not open your books. You found the fable of "The Donkey and the Child;" did you not?

It is on the thirtieth page.

You know the page by heart it seems.

Oh, yes.

And you remember the fable?

Yes.

Do you know it by heart?

We know it perfectly.

Do you know how to spell the words?

We hope so. We have studied every syllable.

That is very well. Now put your books on the table. Where are the books, children?

On the table.

And where is the fable?

In our books, and in our minds.

In your mind; that is a good place for the fable. Recite it in turn. Commence, Mary. — Very well, my dear. — Now, Alice. — And you, Grace. Pronounce your words distinctly. — A little louder, my dear. — That will do. Now all take a piece of chalk, go to the black-boards, and write the fable as you remember it. — Have you finished?

Yes; we have written it.

Very well. Take your books from the table, and return to the black-boards. Each must take his neighbor's board. Look at every word in the book and on the black-board, and mark the errors. Draw a line under every word that is mis-spelt. There is a word that is not right on George's board: prettyly. Prettily is spelt with an i instead of a y. I draw a line under the word; I underline it. Underline all the

words that are mis-spelt, and all the mistakes in punctuation also. — Have you finished?

Yes.

Count the words that are underlined, and write on the black-board the number of mistakes in spelling. How many have you, George?

I have three.

Yes; you have written prettily with a y, piteous with two t's, and left out an e in where-upon. Who corrected George's board?

I did.

You have not marked all the errors, Caroline. Look in your book at the fifth line. Our fable has eleven lines. *And* is the first word in the fifth line. Has George written it correctly?

No.

No, he has written it with a small letter; he should have used a capital. I see another mistake on George's black-board.

Oh, I have so many mistakes.

Yes, my boy. You must be more careful in the future. You have left out the punctuation mark in the second line. You should put a comma after hand. The punctuation is very important. Let us examine it a little. You know the comma. What is the punctuation

mark at the end of the fourth line? — It is a semicolon. After head there is a colon; and a period after said. There is the exclamation point at the end of the fable, after prettily! I am writing a question on the black-board: Are you tired? That is an interrogation point after tired. Look at the word wonder-struck. Do you see the little line between wonder and struck?

Yes.

That is a hyphen. How many mistakes have you in all, George?

I have five, — three in spelling, one in punctuation, and one word spelt with a small letter instead of a capital.

Do you understand the fable, children?

Oh, yes.

Do you not think the donkey was very polite?

Yes; because he said thank you.

Would not the little boy's mother have liked the donkey?

He thought so; we like him, too.

The poor beast said hihan; did he not?

He said it twice. What does hihan mean? Hihan means thank you, in the donkey's language. He cannot say thank you in English, so he speaks his own language and says hihan.

What does wonder-struck mean?

When the donkey said thank you, in his way, Hihan! Hihan! the child was surprised and very much astonished. He stood with eyes and mouth wide open, wonder-struck at hearing the donkey speak. The poor donkey was very uncomfortable with the great pannier that he carried.

What is a pannier?

A pannier is a basket or sack put across the donkey's back, hanging down on each side. Do you see?

Yes.

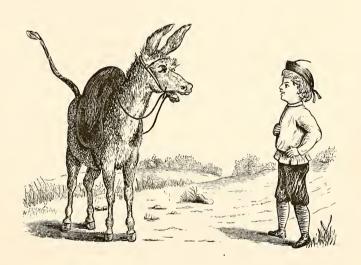
When it is filled with fruit or vegetables, it is quite heavy, and hard for the poor donkey to carry. Then he is sad and unhappy. He does not feel bright and joyous like the little boy, but walks along with a melancholy look. Do you not feel sorry for him, George?

Yes; I pity the poor beast.

And the little boy pitied him too; when he saw him looking so sad and miserable, he could not help offering him his lunch. The donkey's thanks pleased him, and he felt happy that he had given his bread to the hungry animal. How was he looking when the little boy met him, Arthur?

He was holding his head down, with a piteous air.

Yes; but when he took the bread, he held up his head and said joyfully, *Hihan!* Hihan!





VIII.

DAY AND NIGHT.

HERE is another little piece of poetry, children, that I want you to learn by heart for to-morrow.

Once a rash baby climbed a table high,
And shouted, "See! am I not tall?"
Then whack! upon the floor came suddenly,
And there he lay exceeding small!

What did the rash baby do, Louise? He climbed upon a high table.

Yes; he was anxious to look tall. But what happened to him?

Whack! he fell upon the floor.

How did he look then?

Oh, very small indeed.

And very much mortified, I am sure.

I guess he will not try it again.

No, my dear. He was severely punished for his rashness. But we will leave him now. I want to talk to you to-day, my children, about morning and evening, day and night, the months and the year. How old are you, George?

I am seven years, three months, and two days. You are precise, my boy.

Yes; because mamma told me this morning exactly how old I am.

You have already lived a great many days, George. You have seen hundreds of mornings and evenings. You know, children, that the morning and the evening are two parts of the day.

Yes.

The day is a part of the year, the three hundred and sixty-fifth part of the year; or the thirtieth part of the month; or again, the seventh part of the week. You open your eyes wide. That does not astonish me. You live days, months, and years, without thinking of them.

That is because they come and go so fast.

All come here to the window with me. See! there is the sky,—the immense, blue sky. Oh, how pure and clear and beautiful it is, and how high!

Yes; it is far, far above our heads.

Look where I am pointing; fix your eyes on that brilliant object a little larger than Arthur's head, and look steadily at the splendor of the heavens. — What makes you close your eyes?

It is too bright.

True. No one can look at it steadily. It is the sun, my children; the king of day. Do you know what kings are?

No, we do not have kings in America.

We have a president. In Italy they have a king. Victor Emmanuel is the king of Italy now. In England they have a queen. Victoria has been the queen there a great many years.

We have the sun-king, though.

Bravo! Caroline. That is a grand king for America. At the commencement of day, the sun rises from this direction, the east; at the close of day, it sets in that direction, the west; in the middle of the day, it is above our heads, high in the sky. See, there it is! The time when the sun rises, is the morning. We rise in the

morning, too. What time does the sun rise, Arthur?

I do not know.

Where is your watch?

In my pocket.

Show it to me. Look, children. There are two hands on the face of Arthur's watch, on the dial. The hands mark the hours. Do you see the figures, — one, two, three, &c.?

Yes.

The sun rises at six o'clock. Point out six o'clock on the watch, Alice.

There it is.

Right, my little girl. What time do you rise, Grace?

At seven o'clock.

And you, Caroline?

After seven o'clock.

At half past seven?

Yes, at half past seven.

And you, George?

I rise at quarter past seven.

The sun is in the sky, children, during the day, from morning until night. At the close of day, it disappears. We see no more its brilliant light, and all grows dim after its departure. The night, the dark night comes, and silence reigns on the earth. The day has a king, my

children, and the night has a queen, — a bright and smiling queen, that sails slowly through the clouds of the firmament. It is the moon. Can you look at the moon steadily, Alice?

Yes, indeed; and I like to watch it sailing through the clouds.

And the sun?

No; I cannot look at that steadily.

Why not?

It is too brilliant.

It is much more brilliant than the moon; is it not?

Yes; but the moon is more beautiful.

A day is the seventh part of the week. The first day of the week is Sunday. You come to school on Monday; do you not, George?

Yes. We come to school Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays.

Saturdays you have vacation. It is the seventh day of the week. Sunday is the day of repose, and is consecrated to God. There are seven days in a week, and four weeks in a month. We have twelve months in the year, — January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, December. How many days are there in a month?

There are thirty days in a month.

Yes. April, June, September, and November,

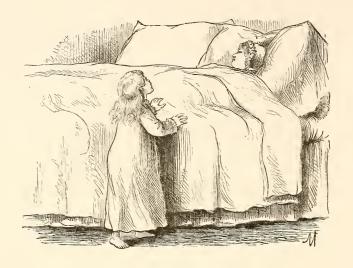
each have thirty days; but January is longer, and has one day more. Name the months that have thirty-one days.

January, March, May, July, August, October, December.

How many days has February?

It is the short month, and only has twenty-eight days.

It has twenty-nine days every four years, my children. That fourth year is called leap-year.



IX.

LITTLE MARIE.

READ together the following little poem, children.

LITTLE MARIE.

Who would not love the little Marie?
So sweet a child at night was never!
She neither cries nor calls, not she,
And makes no naughty noise whatever.
If now and then she cannot sleep,
Though one long hour and more go by,

Never you fancy she will weep,
Or even heave a single sigh.
Quiet she waits the dawn of day,
Then, from her cot right softly creeping,
She harks for what mamma will say,
Or, if asleep, she leaves her sleeping.
But when she wakes at last, — "Good day!
Good day, mamma!" "Did baby speak?
Eyes open ere the peep of day,
Yet not a word? — My sweetest chick,
Come here and kiss your mother quick!"
So, then, I say advisedly,

Count the lines in the poetry, children; how many are there?

Who would not love my little Marie?

There are nineteen.

Do you understand the story?

Yes; but not quite all the words.

Then we will explain them. But first tell me what you do understand. What can you say about it, Grace?

Little Marie is the heroine of the story.

Does she please you?

Yes; she is so good, that every one loves her.

Her mother says, "Who would not love my little Marie?" She is loved because she is good and kind and gentle; is she not?

Yes.

If you are good like little Marie, every one will love you, Grace.

I try to be good.

Yes, my dear, I know you do; and your father and mother, the children and I, all love you. Mary, can you not tell us something about little Marie?

She is always good at night. Is she not good in the day, too?

Yes, Mary; she is good, day and night.

And does not wake her mamma in the night? No, indeed. "She makes no naughty noise whatever." Listen, children. Do you hear the noise on the street? Come here quick, and look out of the window. See all the people hurrying along, some in one direction and some in another. Look! there is a carriage with two beautiful brown horses. How they run! They go like the wind! Do you hear the wind blowing through the trees in the park?

Yes; it shakes the branches, and the leaves fall on the ground.

There goes a great wagon with four large horses. What strong and noble animals horses are!

They are kind and gentle, too.

True, Alice. Well, children, the people that you see walking along the street and talk-

ing, the horses running, the wagon rolling over the pavement, and the wind blowing,—all this makes a great noise; does it not?

Yes, indeed.

There is not much silence in the street. But little Marie is quiet and silent all through the night, and does not make the least noise to disturb her mamma, who is quietly sleeping. Alice, will you tell us something more about the little Marie?

Little Marie does not cry in the night.

No, my dear. "She neither cries nor calls," the poetry says. Why does she not cry, Alice?

Because she is good, and does not wish to wake her mamma.

We sleep in the night, children. Grace, put your head on Mary's shoulder. — Close your eyes. That is the way you look when you are asleep. Are you sleeping, Grace?

No, indeed.

Do you sleep in the day?

No.

Do you sleep in the night?

Yes.

Where?

In my little bed beside my mamma.

In the morning, when some one knocks at the door, you open your eyes and awake; do you not?

Yes; I wake in the morning, when it is time to get up.

The little Marie does not cry, because she does not wish to awaken her mamma who sleeps near her little bed; and yet sometimes she lies awake more than an hour. Poor little dear! She cannot sleep. But you may be very sure that she will not cry or call her mamma. What a good child!

Yes; we love her very much.

She is so good that she does not even sigh. What are you sighing for, Mary?

I do not know.

Do it again, that Louise may hear you. — You gave a long, long sigh that time. We will stop now, children, and continue our study of the poetry to-morrow. Be good and quiet in the night; do not call or cry, and do not make any noise, for your kind mamma sleeps beside you. Do not wake her, children. She is so tired! All day she works for you, your father, and the poor. Let her sleep until daylight. The sun with its soft morning light will awaken her. You will be there near her bed, under her eyes, dear children, smiling and happy; and your dear mamma will be pleased when she takes you in her arms, and will say, "Who would not love my little Marie?"



X.

LITTLE MARIE. — (Continued.)

WE will continue talking about the little Marie to-day, children. Have you all been good during the night?

Yes, yes!

I do not doubt it, my dear children. Have you slept well?

Very well!

Where did you sleep, Benjamin?

In my bed, in the little room near mamma's.

Did you wake your mamma in the night?

No, I never wake my mamma.

You are good, like Marie. The little Marie wakes bright and early in the morning; she is up at sunrise, is she not, George?

Yes; I am up, too, as soon as it is daylight. I do not sleep after the bright sun shines into my

room. I jump out of bed in a minute.

Oh, you jump out of bed! and in jumping from the bed you make a noise, and the noise awakens your mamma. I am afraid you are not good, George.

Yes, I am good; mamma says I am a good boy, because I am so gay and happy in the morning. It gives my mamma pleasure to hear me jump.

Very well, my boy; jump, jump, as much as you wish, if it makes your mamma happy to hear you. But the little Marie does not jump out of bed like George.

"Then from her cot right softly creeping, She harks for what mamma will say."

Is mamma asleep? or is she awake? That is what puzzles Marie's little head; and she goes very softly without making a noise, and places herself before her mamma's bed. How lovingly she looks at her dear mamma! She is asleep, and Marie will not awaken her.

What does she do?

She leaves her mamma, Alice. She goes very softly, and plays on her own little bed. At last Marie's mamma awakes, for the sun is already high in the sky. It is eight o'clock. See, how Marie runs! She jumps like George now. She has heard her mamma calling; she jumps upon the bed. There she is in her mamma's arms! "Good morning, Mamma, good morning," she says. What does Marie's mamma say, Alice?

"Did baby speak? eyes open ere the peep of day?"

She says something else.

Yes; she says, "Come here, and kiss your mother quick."

Marie's mamma loves her little girl, because she is so good.

And because she never cries or makes any noise in the night.

Yes, Grace; and also, because she does not fret or sigh when she is obliged to lie for an hour without sleeping.

And because she creeps softly out of bed, instead of jumping as I do; is it not?

Yes, George; and because she does not say any thing in the morning when her mamma is asleep. She does not say a word.

Why does Marie's mamma call her a little chick?

That is a pet name, my dear. Marie is her mamma's little chick. You have seen the chickens, and you know the cock. Do you remember the cock that did not care for the pearl, but preferred a grain of barley?

I do; but the cock is not a chicken.

No, my dear; but he is the father of the little chickens, and the hen is the mother, — the good, kind mother. How pretty the little chickens look, trotting along in front, behind, and all around her, while she keeps calling to them. "Come, little ones! come, come, come! little ones, come!" Have you ever seen any little chickens, George?

I have seen them in the country.

In the farm-yard?

Yes.

Have you seen how they run and jump around their mother?

Very often; they are so funny!

Do they jump as you do?

Oh, more than I. I have seen them on the old hen's back.

What a good mother she is! Do you not think so?

Yes, she is very good. I have seen seven or eight little chicks under the hen at a time.

Yes, my boy. The hen spreads out her wings

very large, and covers her little brood with them. There they all are, nestled close together with their little heads in her feathers, chattering and chattering, and pushing themselves in their downy bed. But the kind mother is motionless, and says softly: "Be quiet, my little ones; do not dispute, do not push each other, but be still and good. Do not talk any more. Silence! The sun has set; your father is quiet on his perch; all my sisters are asleep. Go to sleep also, my children, under my wings, nestled in my feathers. You will awake to-morrow with the daylight, when your father announces the return of the sun. You will hear his loud voice, my children, when he calls to the farmer and his wife, and to the red-faced Bridget, — 'Awake! awake! it is time to arise! it is half past four!' You will hear him call a hundred times to the cows, to the horses, to the goats, to the sheep, to the great, noisy dog in his kennel, and to all the echoes of the village, — 'Awake! awake! the sun is in the sky!' Good night, my children — good night, my dears!"



XI.

THE GUARDIAN ANGEL.

TERE is a little prayer, my dear children, for you to keep in your memory. It is a prayer to the guardian angel.

THE GUARDIAN ANGEL.

Since God has given me thee to keep, Good angel, watch me all the day; And when I lay me down to sleep, Lean o'er my little bed, I pray; And pity me, for I am weak, And walk beside me still, and speak Words that a child may understand. And, while I listen to thy talk, Lest I should stumble in my walk, Good angel, let me hold thy hand!

Do you understand this little prayer, children?

Yes.

The good angel watches over us and protects us from harm.

My mamma says that the good angel is sad when children are naughty.

Yes, Alice; and when children are good, the angel is happy and smiles with pleasure. Look at Mary! She always has a sweet smile on her lips. The good angel smiles like Mary when you are gentle and good. But when you are not good, he is sad and covers his head with his wings. He sees no more the naughty child, no more whispers words of love as he walks by its side. Come to the windows, children. Do you see the little girls and boys playing and running in the park?

Yes. What a merry time they are having!

They are good, and the guardian angel watches them with pleasure. They play without disputing, and never strike one another. — Oh, what do I see? There are two who are quarrelling; they strike each other. Wicked children!

There they are, rolling on the ground. The guardian angel is very sad, and covers his face that he may see them no longer. But the others will console the angel, because they are good. They play in the paths, and do not run on the grass. Do you see the green grass under those majestic old elms? How bright and fresh it is in this month of May! See the little white flowers dotted over the beautiful green carpet. Do you not admire the pretty white daisies?

Yes, indeed.

There is a sparrow in the grass, close to the daisies. Do you see it?

The little bird?

Yes; it is a European bird, a sparrow from England. It loves its home in America; it loves the month of May, the flowers and the grass; the great elms, too, where it builds its little nest. Do you see its little house on that branch near the great trunk? There it is, right in front of you.

Oh, yes. What a pretty little house it is! But we must not forget the good angel.

"Good angel, watch me all the day, And when I lay me down to sleep, Lean o'er my little bed, I pray." Is it not God who sends him to watch over us, my dear children?

Mamma says that he is the messenger of God.

Yes, Louise; and God says to the angel,—
"Watch over my children; lean over their little beds when they sleep at night; lead and protect them."

How does the angel lean over the bed?

When your little sister is asleep in her cradle, Caroline, does not your mamma lean over her, and watch her with loving eyes?

Yes, often.

And what do you do, my dear?

I climb softly on a chair, without making any noise, lean carefully over the cradle, and kiss my dear little sister.

And your mamma smiles, does she not?

Yes, indeed.

And the guardian angel smiles, too, because you are good, and love your little sister, making your mamma pleased and happy. That will do for to-day, children.

Oh, look! there is the sparrow again in the grass.

What is it doing there?

Oh, it has gone; but it had something in its mouth.

In its bill, Alice. Where has it gone?

To its little nest in the old tree.

Patience, children; it will come again soon. Watch carefully at the door of its little house.

It does not come.

It will come. — There it is, hopping along the grass again.

Look! look! it has something else in its bill.

Yes, it is a bit of straw. It leaves the grass, and flies with it to its little house. That is for its nest, children. It is making a nest, a nice nest for its little ones.

Has it any little ones?

Not yet. They will be here next month in June. The good mamma sees them in imagination. They are already in her heart. She loves them and works for them; it is for them that she hops about over the grass, looking for the little bits of straw. She is making a soft little nest for her children.



XII.

THE GAME.

WOULD you like to play a game to-day, children?

Oh, yes indeed!

Will you be very good, like the children in the park?

Yes; we will be very good.

And not make the guardian angel sad?

No, indeed. We will make the guardian angel smile.

Very well; we will play a game called the "Flying Pigeon."

We know. The pigeon is a bird, and flies.

Where does it fly?

In the air.

Does it light on the branches of the trees like the sparrow?

No.

Where does it light when it is tired flying? In its little house.

Yes; in the pigeon-house. It lights also on the tops of our houses, and goes hopping along the roofs, followed by its children. In order to play "Flying Pigeon," you must know the names of all the birds and animals. You all know the domestic animals,—the horse, the donkey, the ox, the cow, the calf, the sheep, the lamb, and the goat. Did you ever see a goat, George?

Yes; the goat has horns.

Then there is the dog and the cat. Did any of you ever see a fox?

Yes, I have.

Where, Arthur?

At the menagerie.

He is a very cunning animal, and knows many funny tricks.

The cat is cunning, too.

Yes, Alice, very. Do you like the dog?

Yes, indeed; he is so bright and intelligent.

He is man's most faithful companion. I prefer the dog and the horse to all other domestic animals. What other animals did you see at the menagerie, Arthur?

Oh, a great many. The lion, the tiger, the leopard, the bear, the camel, and the elephant.

Did you see a wolf? the wicked wolf that eats the little lambs?

Yes; he is a cruel animal.

And the birds; do you know the names of the birds, children?

We know some of them.

You all know the robin, the sparrow, and the canary. But there are a great many others. The lark is the bird of the heavens. It flies high, high in the air, and sings in the beautiful blue sky above the green fields. The humming-bird is the smallest of all the birds. It flies about like the butterfly, visiting the roses, the lilies, and all the sweet flowers. The mocking-bird comes from Florida. Do you know the king of the birds, George?

It is the eagle.

Yes; the proud and superb eagle. The hawk is a bird of prey, and is the terror of hens and chickens, pigeons, and all the small birds. Did you ever see a bat?

Yes; it is a homely creature.

It comes out only at night. It has a horror of daylight, like the owl.

The owl has great eyes.

Yes; but it can only see at night. Then it flies about, frightening all the birds of the forest.

My papa says that the owl is a philosopher.

True, George. The owl and the ox are two great philosophers. They are always thinking. When the ox stands motionless in the field, his great eyes fixed on the trunk of a tree, what do you suppose he is thinking about?

We do not know.

And do you know what the owl thinks of all day long in the bottom of his hole?

No, indeed.

Did you ever see the ant, George, — that busy little insect?

Yes; it is always working.

Where?

On the ground.

It works on the ground and in the ground. One meets the ant everywhere; in the gardens, the fields, and the meadows, always active and diligent. Now we will play "Flying Pigeon." Come here, Louise. Put your finger on my knee, by the side of mine. — Now, listen. When I say, "Fly away, pigeon!" I raise my finger,

and you must raise yours. It is true, that the pigeon flies; is it not?

Yes; it is a bird.

Very well. Now let us commence. Quick, put your finger on my knee. Pay attention. Fly away, cat! — Why do you raise your finger?

Because you raised yours.

Can the cat fly?

No, indeed.

Therefore, you must not raise your finger.

But you raised your finger?

That is the trick, my dear. If you raise your finger when I say some creature flies that cannot fly, you will have to pay a forfeit. Come here, George. We will try.

There is my finger on your knee.

Fly away, pigeon!

I raise my finger.

Fly away, raven!

I raise my finger.

Fly away, robin! — Fly away, bat! — Fly away, sheep! — Ah! you are caught, George. You raised your finger.

Yes; my finger followed yours. I know well enough that sheep cannot fly.

Give me a forfeit.

There is my book.

Alice, come and see if I shall be able to catch you. Be careful, my dear. Fly away, canary!

I raise my finger.

Fly away, robin!

I raise my finger.

Fly away, humming-bird!

I raise my finger

Fly away, parrot!

I raise my finger.

Fly away, camel!

I raise my finger.

Ah! you raise your finger. A camel flying through the air! That would be a strange-looking bird.

I am caught.

Yes; you must give me a forfeit.

I will give you my ring.

Good morning now, children. To-morrow, when you are here, we will redeem the forfeits.



XIII.

THE FORFEITS.

T WOULD like my book.

And I my ring.

I must have my book to study my lessons.

You will have to redeem it, George.

See my poor finger without its ring. It has been so sad since yesterday.

Yes; I am afraid your poor little finger has taken cold.

I think it has.

Very well, Alice, you must sacrifice yourself for your unfortunate finger.

What must I do?

You must redeem it.

What shall I do to redeem it?

Let me see. Benjamin is the youngest; he shall have the privilege of naming your penance.

O Benjamin! do be good to me.

I shall be just, Alice. Your ring is worth a great deal.

You are right, little boy. A light penance cannot redeem this pretty ring, all brilliant with gold.

There is a pearl in it.

Yes; a white pearl, like the daisies in the park.

What shall I give for a penance?

Decide yourself, my boy.

Alice, you must sing a song.

That is impossible. Do you not hear, cruel boy, that I can hardly speak?

Alice is very hoarse, my boy; she has a bad cold. Ask her to make a cheese, Benjamin. If she makes a handsome one, we will give back her ring.

I am ready to make a cheese.

Tell me how you will make it.

I shall turn as fast as I can, then seat myself suddenly.

Turn then rapidly, Alice, and seat yourself quickly. The wind will go into your dress, and you will make us a large cheese.

There!

Admirable! your dress covers half the room. You have redeemed your pretty ring, my dear.

Now it is my turn. I wish to redeem my book at any price.

At any price! Take care, George. We shall give you a high one.

I will join my feet together, and jump on a chair.

No, my boy; you cannot jump as high as that with your feet joined.

I practise gymnastics.

No matter! we will find another penance for you. We will make you sit on your chair motionless as your book on the table, for ten minutes.

Oh, I never could do that!

Would you prefer to count twenty backwards, like this? — Twenty, nineteen, eighteen, etc., or would you prefer to hop round the room on one foot?

I will hop round the room on one foot.

Very well, my boy. Bend your left knee,

and raise your left foot; now hop on your right foot.

I bend my knee and raise my foot. I am off! Take care! Do not touch the floor with your left foot.

I have finished, and I take my book.

Very well done, George. For to-morrow, children, you will learn by heart the first verse of the following poetry.

GOD SEES ME.

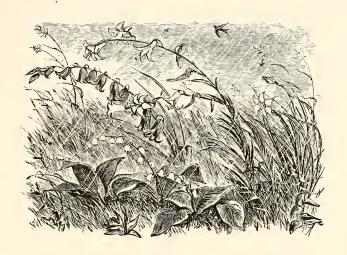
All things, papa says, God can see.

He sees me, too, then; what a blessing!
God sees me at my mother's knee,
And far from her kind eyes' caressing.

God sees me not by daylight only,
Under the blue and open skies;
He sees me in the midnight lonely,
And the thought makes my courage rise.

Sometimes God sees me sweet and good, And twice as happy for His eye; Anon he sees my wayward mood, But makes me sorry by and by.

God sees me still where'er I go;
Daily will I remember this,
And ever better try to grow,
And worthier of a love like His.



XIV.

GOD SEES US.

RECITE your lesson, children. — Very well!
Now let us talk about the poetry a little
while. What does the little boy's father tell
him?

He tells him that God sees all things.

Yes, children; the eye of God is here in this room; it is on you, Caroline, and on us all; it is in the heavens, and on the earth; it is everywhere. Where is God, Benjamin?

He is everywhere.

Does He see you?

Yes.

Are you sorry that God sees you?

No, indeed.

Are you not happy when your father and mother watch you?

Oh, yes. But when they do not look at me, when my papa reads his paper and my mamma is busy with her sewing, I am unhappy.

Never be unhappy, my little boy, for you are not alone; there is One who sees you constantly. His watchful eye is always upon you, and He loves and protects you, like your father and mother. The little boy is happy, because God sees him; is he not?

Yes; for he says, "What a blessing!"

Yes, it is indeed a blessing to be seen by God, and to know that He is always watching and caring for his children; that His eye is ever upon them, never absent, never wandering. He watches you by the side of your mother; and when you are gentle and good, making her smile from the gladness of her heart, He looks on you with happiness. Do you remember the little Marie, Grace?

Yes; she was so good that she made the guardian angel smile.

Marie made God smile, too, when he sent the

guardian angel. While Marie was playing noiselessly on her little bed, waiting for her mamma to wake, the good angel was beside her; and God looked with love upon them, and blessed the little family.

God sees me when I jump upon my mamma's bed.

Yes, George; and He blesses you, too, because your mamma is happy to see you so full of joy. God sees you, children, when your mamma is not with you, when you are far away from her protecting eye. God sees us always.

"God sees me not by daylight only, Under the blue and open skies; He sees me in the midnight lonely, And the thought makes my courage rise."

The sky is not always blue.

True, Alice. Some days we do not see the blue sky or the bright sunlight. Those are gloomy days; the dark, stormy days of winter. The sunny months have passed. May and June are gone with the roses and green leaves, and the sparrow that carried the bits of straw to make a soft nest for its little ones. The pretty pink flowers are gone from the appletree, and the robin-redbreast no longer sits on its branches to delight us with its cheerful song.

Hot July has passed, and we see no more its fields of golden grain. The rosy peaches, the red currants, the yellow apricots, all are gone. August, September, October have passed; November also. Autumn is no more.

Autumn is the third season; is it not?

Yes, my boy.

Our autumn is very beautiful, but it does not have four months.

No, George, it has three months.

You said August, September, October, and November.

Excuse my carelessness, my boy. August belongs to summer. Name the spring months.

They are March, April, and May.

Tell me the months of winter. That is the cold season, the time of misery for the poor who have neither food nor fire, and for the little sparrows that are without a nest and without little ones.

The winter months are December, January, and February.

Through all the storms and tempests of winter, God never abandons His children, or turns aside His watchful eye. The little boy is not afraid in the night. Are children generally afraid in darkness and solitude?

Yes; I do not like to be alone in the dark.

But you are not alone, Caroline, for God is

always there. The little boy knows that God is with him and is not afraid; he is secure in the knowledge of God's presence. In the darkness and solitude of the night, God is the light and the companion. Are you afraid in a storm, children?

No.

Listen to the wind whistling through the trees. The great elms shake their leaves; their branches make war with each other; the tempest is in the heads of the giants of the park. Gone are the little birds and butterflies! The daisies hide their white heads under the grass, and lie deserted on the ground. Look in the street. How desolate it is! All the doors are closely shut. There goes a little brown pony galloping, with his master in the carriage. The dust fills his nostrils, and the poor animal tosses his head to the right and to the left, tormented by the wind; his eyes are nearly blinded, and frightened, he throws his ears back on his trembling neck. The firmament is full of tumult. Do you hear the peals of thunder crashing and rumbling? — Do not be afraid, children; we have been dreaming. See the blue sky above our heads! It is May. Not a leaf is moving on the trees, and I hear the robin-redbreast singing; and there is the little black swallow, chasing the flies in the sunlight.



XV.

THE SQUIRREL.

LISTEN to a little fable about a squirrel, which I will read to you.

THE SQUIRREL.

Up in the boughs of that linden-tree Is a lonely little squirrel; see, How like a plume his tail doth flash! With his fine ear, and his moustache, His brilliant eyes and nose so keen, 'Tis the drollest creature ever seen!

He leaps and flies, In the airiest wise.

Ah, if he would but come this way,
And let us catch him, and with him play!
Then were he always very good,
We would give him a cage, indeed we would!

Squirrel, my dear,

I pray you come here!

Look, I lay in the grass for you

A filbert and a chestnut, too.

Oh, bah! the silly, graceless thing!

He would rather be free; he is off with a spring!

George, give us a description of the hero of our fable.

He is a funny hero.

But he is a hero, my boy. The pretty little children call him with their charming voices, and invite him to a banquet. "Little squirrel, little squirrel," they say, one after the other, "come this way. See! here are some nice chestnuts and filberts from grandfather's great trees. We have put them on the soft, green grass for you, my gay little jumper. It is a dish for a king, my friend. Come down from your linden-tree, and seat yourself at the festive board." Well, George; does the little squirrel leave his branch?

No, he is obstinate.

You wrong him, my boy. He loves his liberty,

and nothing would tempt him to go into the little girl's cage. Is he wrong?

No, indeed. I would not like to lose my liberty, and be shut up in a cage.

But he is hungry, for it is in November that the little girls are calling him, and for many a day there have been no nuts on the trees.

Poor little squirrel! he suffers because he is hungry.

Yes, George. But he would rather suffer from hunger than lose his liberty, even if it were to live in a gilded cage, always provided with filberts and chestnuts.

He is a brave little fellow, and I will never call him funny again. Shall I tell you about him?

Yes, George. I have already asked you to do so.

The little squirrel is on the branch of a lindentree. His tail flashes like a plume. — I can see his tail, his long, handsome tail of beautiful brown hair. But I do not see the *plume*.

He has no plume, my boy; his tail looks like a plume as he balances it on his thin body, and over his lively little head. When you are in the country during vacation, George, go to the farm-yard.

What for?

To make a plume. Go to the edge of the

pond where the ducks, the geese, and the swans are swimming. Pick up their feathers which you will see on the ground, together with those of the cock and the hens, which you will find in the farm-yard.

Why?

To make a plume, my boy. When you have them all in your hand, tie them together at the small end.

Oh, yes; I can do that.

There is your plume, waving before your eyes. A bouquet of cock's, hen's, duck's, and swan's feathers. It is a funny kind of plume; is it not?

Yes, indeed.

Do you understand how the squirrel's tail is like a plume?

Yes; because it waves over his head.

Continue your description, George.

Our little squirrel has an acute ear.

Yes; he hears the slightest noise.

He wears a moustache, and his eyes are very brilliant; he has a queer little nose, and is a funny fellow. I like to see him springing and bounding from one branch to another.

He is very graceful.

But I have seen him jump badly. I have seen him miss the branch, and fall to the ground.

Poor little squirrel! Did it kill him?

No, indeed. He jumped up and ran like the wind back to the tree, and climbed into it again.

Did he climb quickly?

A minute after his fall, he was sitting quietly on a great branch, looking at me with his brilliant eyes, while his tail waved like a plume over his head. I think he was mocking me.

No, George; he was happy in his liberty.



XVI.

THE GAME OF TRADES.

DO you know how to dance, George?
No; but my sister goes every Wednesday and Saturday afternoon with the little girls and boys to the dancing-school.

Have you ever seen her dance?

Yes; it amuses me, and I like to hear the violin.

And why do you not dance with the little girls?

Oh, I am too young.

Can you sing?

I sing for mamma and myself, but my sister says I do not sing right.

Well, children, we are going to sing and dance to-day. Do not make a mistake, George, and do not jump faster than the little girls, as we dance around. Go to the piano, Louise, and play the music, so that the children will know how to sing.



This is the way we make a bow,
Make a bow,
Make a bow.
This is the way we make a bow,
So early in the morning.

How do you make a bow, Arthur? This way.

Very well! Now, my children, while you are singing and dancing, make the most polite bows you can. Commence again, and keep time with the music. — Those are very nice bows. Now what do the laundresses do?

What is a laundress?

A laundress, my children, is a woman who washes. Benjamin's collar, Caroline's handkerchief, and all your clothes, children, are given to the washer-woman, who puts them in soap and water, and washes them white and clean. Sing and dance children, and imitate the washerwoman as she is washing the clothes.

This is the way we wash our clothes,
Wash our clothes,
Wash our clothes.
This is the way we wash our clothes,
So early in the morning.

Did you ever see the tailors?

Yes.

What do they do?

They make men's and boys' clothes.

Yes; they cut the cloth and then sew it. How do they sew?

They take a needle and thread, and sew this way.

You imitate them perfectly, Arthur. All sing,

This is the way the tailors sew, &c.

What do the blacksmiths do? have you ever seen them?

Oh, yes.

When a horse has lost his shoe, it is very

hard for him to walk. It makes his feet sore to step on the hard stones in the street, and his master takes him to the blacksmith's.

We know; the blacksmith strikes on the iron this way.

That is right. Imitate the blacksmiths, and sing,

This is the way the blacksmiths do, &c.

And the winnowers; have you ever seen them winnow the grain?

Where do they winnow?

In the barn, at the farm. If you go into the fields in the months of July and August, you will see growing the tall stalks of grain,—wheat, rye, and barley. A month later the farmer will cut them down with his scythe, as you see him mow the grass in June. Did you ever see the farmers mow?

Yes, indeed.

How do they mow?

This is the way the farmers mow, &c.

Well done, children. You mow as if you were accustomed to it.

We would like to winnow, but we have never seen the winnowers.

When the grain is cut, and the stalks are put

together in sheaves, the farmer puts them into his cart; does he not?

Yes; and the horses draw the cart, full of grain, to the barn.

In the winter, the farmer's workmen beat the grain. What do they do afterwards, George?

Afterwards? That is all; the grain is all beaten from the stalks.

Yes, but that is not all. They do not leave the grain on the barn floor. They pile it up in a great heap,—

Oh, yes! and then the workmen put it into their sacks.

No, no, children, not yet. Do you not see the straw and dust mixed with the grain? What would the farmer say if you put all that dirt into his sacks?

He would not like it at all. What is done now?

There is the winnower, children. He takes the fan, fills it full of grain, dust, and straw, and tosses it gently, this way; as he tosses and tosses, the wind blows away all the dust and chaff; and the grain, the good grain, which is to make our bread, rests in the fan quite clean by itself.

We understand.

This is the way they toss the grain, &c.

That will do, children. You are very tired, and will sleep well to-night, for you have worked hard. You have danced, and you have sung; you have showed us how to make fine bows; you have washed like the laundresses, and sewed like the tailors; you have beaten the iron like the blacksmiths, and mowed like the farmers; and lastly, you have tossed the grain like the winnowers, "so early in the morning." You have not been idle, my children. Good morning.



XVII.

REYNARD, THE FOX.

LOOK, children. Here are two individuals, that I think you are acquainted with.*

Yes, indeed. I have seen them both at the menagerie.

Did you play with them?

No, I was afraid of the small one.

Is he stronger than you?

I do not know; but mamma told me that he is a wicked animal, and will bite.

That is true; and the larger one, — were you afraid of him?

Oh, yes; he is a terrible creature.

Do you know their names?

The smaller is called Reynard, the fox; the other is a wolf.

An ancient story tells us that they are relations.

Are they brothers?

No; Reynard is the nephew of Isegrim.

Who is Isegrim?

Isegrim is the wolf's name, in this story of the olden time.

We like such stories.

Do you know many of them?

We know Blue Beard and Little Red Riding Hood, Cinderella and Tom Thumb.

Do you know Æsop's Fables?

Some of them.

Do you like fables?

Very much. The animals speak like little boys and girls.

And have many amusing adventures.

Oh, yes; they are very funny, sometimes.

Which is the stronger, the fox or the wolf?

The wolf.

And which has the most cunning?

The fox.

One morning, quite early, Reynard went to his uncle Isegrim's house. He seemed sick and tired.

I guess he had not slept during the night.

Why so, George?

Oh, he had probably been off hunting.

In the dark?

He likes the dark.

Why, my boy?

Because the men and boys cannot see him when it is dark.

And is he afraid of them?

Yes, indeed; for he knows that their dogs may chase and kill him.

And the men, — why does he fear them?

They may shoot him with their guns.

Poor Reynard!

Why do you say poor Reynard?

Oh, how unhappy his wife must feel! and the poor little foxes, his children, how terrible for them to lose their father! What are you laughing at, Alice? George, why do you push Arthur with your elbow? What are you all laughing at? Do you not pity the poor fox?

No, indeed; and we are laughing, because you speak of the wife and children of such a wicked animal.

Come here, Alice, and jump upon my knees. Give your attention, my cruel little children, who laugh at the fox's death. I will tell you a little story.

One cold winter's day, Reynard and his family were in misery. For eight long days, the snow had completely covered the ground around his burrow. For a week, the cold north wind had been blowing. Poor Reynard and his family were dying of hunger and cold, for in all his hunting the poor fox had not been able to find a rabbit, a rat, or a mouse. Not a sound disturbed the quiet of the forest but the whistling of the wind and the cracking of the trees. Even the ravens abandoned the desolate spot; not a single croaking was heard, to give hope to the unhappy family. But far, far away, a cock joyfully saluted the morning; and his song, which the echoes of the mountains repeated, oh! how it rent the hearts of Reynard, his wife, and his children.

Why?

Because these poor unfortunate creatures constantly saw in imagination a nice plump cock, hens, and chickens; and yet they were dying of hunger, as I have told you. The unhappy mother drew her children close to her side, and tried to make them forget their hunger; but

the poor little things, crying and screaming, did not notice her kind caresses. What a sight for poor Reynard! His heart was broken. With tears in his eyes, he looked at his wife and children; and still he could hear the cock cheerily crowing.

Where was the cock?

At the farm-yard, about fifty steps from the edge of the forest. All at once, Reynard jumps to his feet. He cannot see his family die before his eyes; he will brave every danger to save them. "Good-by, my dear; good-by, my sons," he says. "Courage! I am going to John Rigot's farm."

Who is John Rigot?

The farmer who lives near the forest. The cock, that has been crowing so lustily, lives in his farm-yard. Reynard's wife says, "Go; and may kind fortune befriend you! But beware of the farm-dogs and the hunters, the snares and the traps; and return quickly, for we are dying." With an affectionate farewell, Reynard leaves his home. He walks through the woods, avoiding the beaten path, and soon arrives at John Rigot's farm. The gate to the farm-yard is closed. Reynard crouches down in the snow, and pushes his head under the gate. There is the cock, drum-major of the farm-yard, bright

and joyous in the midst of his twenty-five hens. But also before Reynard's eyes are two great dogs, lying in the kennel; and near the barndoor stands the farm-boy, leaning on his pitchfork. The danger is great; but Reynard thinks of his children, and braves every thing. A hen leaves the dunghill, where she has been digging with her sisters, and passes and repasses before Reynard's very nose. He makes a heroic effort, glides under the gate, seizes his prey, and turns to go out again. But, alas! the hen makes the farm-yard resound with her cries; the cock and all the hens join in a deafening concert with the dogs, that have seen the enemy, and now bark furiously. Reynard, however, flies without loosening his hold of what he knows will save the life of his family. But the farmer and his boy, both armed with pitchforks, and the two dogs, rush in pursuit of the robber. He is just on the point of entering the forest, when the dogs reach him, and kill him. Now tell me, do you not pity Reynard?

Yes, indeed.

He perished thinking of his poor wife and children, who were so anxiously awaiting him.

I am very sorry for him.

Yes, little Grace; and are you not sorry for the poor mother and the little children? Yes.

Imagine their despair when day is gone and night comes, and no Reynard returns.

Did they die of hunger?

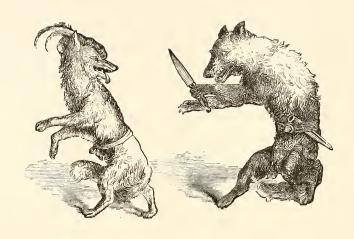
I know nothing more; I hope not. Providence, no doubt, cared for them.

What is a burrow?

It is Reynard's house; it is in the ground, under the earth. The poor little foxes and their mother mourned in their burrow, many a long day, the death of the unfortunate Reynard.

Will you not tell us the story of the other Reynard, Isegrim's nephew?

I will tell it to you to-morrow.



XVIII.

REYNARD AND HIS UNCLE ISEGRIM.

YOU remember the Reynard I told you about yesterday?

Yes; poor Reynard is dead. We long to hear about the other Reynard, Isegrim's nephew.

He is the hero of a great book, called "The History of Reynard, the Fox." His adventures have rendered him immortal.

Will you not tell us the story?

It is very long. He had a hundred adven-

tures; I will tell you first an incident of his youth.

Was he married, like the other Reynard?

No, he was quite young. Listen. One morning he went to his uncle's house.

Isegrim's house?

Yes. His eyes were troubled, and his hair was all bristled up.

His eyes troubled?

Yes, there seemed to be no light in them; they were heavy and dull.

And how was his hair?

When the horse, the dog, and the cat are contented and happy, or when they have had a nice breakfast, their glossy hairs lie smoothly together. But if they are unhappy, tired, afraid, or troubled; if the wind blows, and the sky is dark;—at such times, they bristle up their hair all over their skin.

I see what you mean. Reynard was unhappy when he went to his uncle's house.

Isegrim said to him, "What is the matter, my fine nephew? You seem to be suffering; are you sick?"—"Yes," answered Reynard, "I feel very miserable."—"Have you breakfasted?"—"No, I do not wish any breakfast."

Oh, he must be sick, if he has lost his appetite.

One would think so; but perhaps it is a trick. You know Reynard is not as strong as Isegrim. God did not give him strength. He gave him wit and cunning. Without them, how would he live in the midst of wolves and tigers, great dogs and hunters?

He could not live; they would kill him.

He is now at the house of the wolf, a strong and cruel beast; but he has his wit to defend himself, and I am sure he will not be conquered by force. We will find out, however. Isegrim called his wife, who prepared a slight breakfast for Reynard, consisting of a rat and two rabbit-cutlets.

That is enough for a sick fox, I think.

Ah! but Reynard was not sick. It was one of his wily tricks; for at that very moment, he raised his eyes to the ceiling of Isegrim's house, and there saw three nice hams hanging. "Why are not those fine hams in my burrow?" he thinks. For ten days, for a month, he could live like a king, without care or work. How shall he get those hams? The wolf is stronger than he. But he is determined to have them in some way.

How will he do it?

Listen to what he says. "My kind uncle and aunt, your hams are in danger. All your neigh-

bors will wish for them, and when they are hungry will ask to eat them with you."—"And what is your advice about it, nephew?"—"This is my advice, my dear aunt and uncle. Take down the three hams, hide them in the cellar or garret, and say to your neighbors that some one has stolen your three great hams."—"Pshaw!" said Isegrim, "I am not afraid of my neighbors. Look at my teeth, my timid nephew; I am well armed. The three hams are for my wife and myself. No, nephew; even my brother will not eat those hams."

Poor Reynard never had a taste of the hams.

You are mistaken, George. Reynard ate the whole of the three, all by himself.

How was that possible?

After breakfast, Reynard took leave of his uncle and aunt, and went away thinking of the three hams. Two days passed, and he did not go near Isegrim. But the night of the second day, when it was dark, our hero went to his uncle's house. The door was closed. Every one was asleep, — master, mistress, and servants. Reynard softly climbed upon the roof, raised some of the tiles, and made an opening. He passed in quickly, reached the hams, unfastened them, and with one bound jumped to the ground, and was off to his burrow as fast as his legs could

carry him. There he stopped to take breath, laughing in his sleeve at the thought of his uncle, who the next morning would see the sun enter his room by the roof, and would look in vain for his three hams. He then cut them in small pieces, and cautiously hid them in the straw of his bed.

Isegrim must have been astonished when he awoke.

His cries were heard everywhere in the forest. The animals fled in dismay. "What is all this?" he cried; "my roof open, my hams, my precious hams, stolen! help! robbers! Ersewind, we are lost!"

Who is Ersewind?

Isegrim's wife, Reynard's aunt. As soon as she was awake, she screamed louder than her husband. The wolf and his wife were still screaming when Reynard arrived.

What imprudence! Why did he go there?

He wanted to laugh at them. "Good morning, dear uncle. What is the matter? what is all this noise about? are you sick?"—"I have reason enough to be sick," answered Isegrim; "you remember the three beautiful hams you saw here day before yesterday. They are gone. Some one has stolen them!" Reynard burst into a loud laugh and cried, "That is right,

that is right, my good uncle; that is just what you should say. Very well indeed, good uncle and aunt! You are not so stupid, after all. You have followed my advice; your fine hams are in the cellar, I suppose. Bravo! Run into the street, through the woods, cry everywhere, 'Our hams are stolen!' Your neighbors will believe it, and I shall never betray your secret."

What did the wolves say?

How do I know? Reynard did not listen to them; he fled, laughing and screaming "Goodby, my uncle! good-by, my aunt!"



XIX.

YES OR NO.

CHILDREN, I am going to teach you an instructive little game to-day, called "Yes or No."

How do we play it?

One of you must leave the room, and go into the little room or the hall.

What will the rest of us do?

Choose an object or a person, some celebrated person if you like, and then call to the one who went out, Come; or, Ready.

Why?

Because the one who was absent, does not know the secret of the others, and must guess it by asking questions. If he is sharp like Reynard, he will guess it; if not, he must go out again. Would you like to have me go out first, children?

Yes, yes.

I will go; choose your secret.

Let us take Benjamin's head.

Yes; he will never guess that. Ready! ready! come! Now we will see if you are like Reynard.

Is it a man you have chosen?

No.

Is it an animal?

No.

Is it an inanimate object?

No.

Neither a man, animal, nor inanimate object. What can it be! — Is it any thing alive?

Yes.

Is it a part of an animal?

Yes.

Is it a part of a man?

Yes.

Is the object in the room?

Yes.

Does it belong to George?

No.

You are smiling, Benjamin. Does it belong to Benjamin?

Yes.

Is it his head?

Yes.

Ah, George, it is your turn now. We will see how quick you are.

Oh, I shall guess it, I know.

Wait a moment, my boy, we are going to prove it; leave the room. — Do you know George Washington?

Yes, indeed. He was the father of our country.

The founder of American independence; was he not?

Yes; he fought against the English.

Is he still living?

No; he died a long time ago.

Did he not live in the last century, the eighteenth century?

Yes.

Let us take George Washington, and see if George is bright enough to guess it.

Yes, yes.

Ready, George! come!

Here I am, ready to find out your secret. Who chose the word?

You are too eurious, my boy. We wait for your questions; commence.

Is it a man you have chosen?

Yes.

Is he here?

No.

Is he an American?

Yes.

Is he living?

No.

Has he been dead a long time?

Yes.

Was he a celebrated mán?

Yes.

Was he good, brave, and the friend of liberty? Yes.

Was he president of the United States?

Yes.

It is George Washington; is it not?

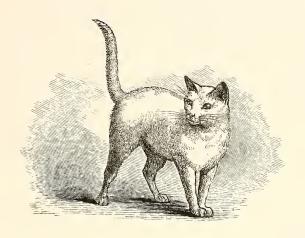
Yes. You have proved yourself very bright, George. Be good, brave, and a friend of liberty, a friend of your country, like your glorious defender, George Washington. Let us read now a little poem, children; you will learn the first six lines by heart for to-morrow.

THE WHITE CAT.

This is the tale of a white cat. A joyous life led he, And ever in the parlor sat, With much fine company; And soft the rug, and of the best, Whereon Grimalkin took his rest. But daily he the kitchen sought, And one fine morn he chose Beside the grimy dinner-pot Awhile to purr and doze. Then came the maid and kicked him in despite, Till the intruder rose: And, all forgetful of his grimy flight, Went ambling toward the parlor-door, Thinking to stretch on his fine rug once more. But, lo! they spurned him even there; They chased him straight away; Even his mistress, kind and fair, Caressed him not that day. Methinks that every little maid Who, careless in attire,

Slipshod about her home hath strayed,

Like lesson doth require.



XX.

THE WHITE CAT.

HAVE you learned the six lines of poetry I gave you yesterday?

Yes.

Write them from memory on the blackboard.

— Now correct them.

Who is Grimalkin?

Grimalkin, puss, and kitty belong to the same family. Grimalkin is the great cat; puss and kitty are smaller than he. Are they pets of yours, Caroline?

Yes, I like our great cat when he is good.

He is naughty sometimes. When you caress him gently, he hunches his back up and raises his tail in the air. Take care! you must not be too confident, my child, and caress him too long, for he will become tired of it after a while. Above all, look out for his long tail; if you pull that, his claws will come out of their velvet covering. Quick! look out for your tender, pretty little hand.

Why does he have claws?

To defend himself, George. What would he do when he met an army of rats, if he did not have his claws?

He would have to run.

How ashamed he would be! What would your father say if the rats ransacked his garret and cellar, if they went into his library and gnawed the handsome books? What would your mamma say if they ravaged her kitchen and pantry? What do you think your mother and father both would say, if the rats and the mice went running about the house, jumping and dancing over the chairs and tables? And what would you say, George, if in the night they had their banquets, and held their assemblies under your bed, or perhaps upon it?

Oh, what a picture! It makes me shudder

to think of it. God is indeed good to give claws to the cat.

Yes, my boy; we see the goodness of God in all his works.

I think a great deal of our puss.

Is she pretty, Mary?

Yes; she is not white like the cat we have just read about.

Is she black?

No.

Is she brown?

No; she has four colors. Her head is nearly all white; she has a small black spot near the nose, on the left side, and another black spot behind her left ear.

Tell us more about her, Mary.

Her tail is black, white, and brown; on her body she has four colors, for she is marked with gray spots on her neck. She is so funny when she plays with her long tail.

Have you ever seen her chase it round and round, trying to catch it? The long tail runs away as fast as puss turns around.

I have seen her many times.

Puss will not be conquered by her elegant tail. See! she stops turning. She looks fixedly at it, as it comes and goes. What attention! see her eyes! how eager they are! How

she turns her head first to the right, then to the left! Now she stands on her four paws ready to jump; she seizes her long tail, — she holds it between her paws. Do you think she will bite it?

Oh, no; she caresses it with her tongue.

Yes; and then she lies down on the hearth, forgets her tail, her chase, and her victory, puts her head on her fore paws, closes her eyes, and goes to sleep purring. Grimalkin also wanted to go to sleep purring behind the dinner-pot in the kitchen.

Did he rub against it?

Patience! wait a little. Where did Grimalkin go one fine day? Tell us, George.

He went to make a visit in the kitchen. Why did he go out of the parlor?

He was hungry, my boy; he did not see any thing to eat in the parlor, and went into the kitchen to find the cook. She did not give him any thing, I suppose; and while he was waiting for a chance to put his paw on a tid-bit, he lay down near the stove. He knew very well that the cook suspected him to be a thief, and if he were seen, she would chase him away. Now what does he do? He tries to make himself as small as possible, and to hide behind the dinner-pot. But do not imagine that Gri-

malkin went to sleep. He made believe that he was asleep, but was really watching every movement in the kitchen. He was waiting for a chance to steal his dinner. He was neither sleeping nor purring. Did you ever think how much the purring of a cat is like the sound of a spinning-wheel? Did you ever see a spinning-wheel?

My grandmother has one.

Have you ever seen her spin, Arthur?

Yes; she moves the wheel with her foot.

That is true; and as she turns the wheel round and round and round, we hear a dull, monotonous noise, a soft buzzing which comes to us from the chimney-corner, where she sits spinning through the long winter evenings. And so with Grimalkin when he is happy and quietly dozing before the fire; we hear his gentle purring like the buzzing of the spinning-wheel.

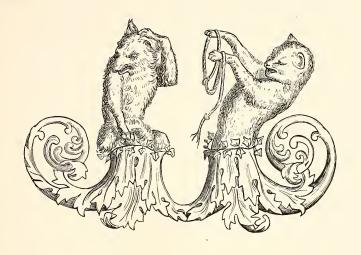
The cook drove him away from the stove.

Poor Grimalkin! He returns to the parlor, still hungry. He is very unhappy. His mistress sees him covered with smut, — for he rubbed against the dinner-pot in the kitchen, and made himself black and dirty; she drives him out of the room. "Go away," she says; "go and wash yourself. You are not allowed

110 CHATS WITH THE LITTLE ONES.

in the parlor when your toilet is not made. Go and make yourself clean and white." And Grimalkin, with his ears and tail down, wanders away, meowing sadly.





XXI.

TIBERT AND REYNARD.

I AM going to tell you a story of the olden time to-day, children; and the heroes are Reynard the fox and one of Grimalkin's ancestors.

Those are two cunning individuals.

Indeed they are. Grimalkin's ancestor is called Tibert. Reynard was looking badly the day he met Tibert.

Was he hungry?

He was both hungry and tired. He had been chasing all through the forest and about the farms, but everywhere he had been unfortunate. The dogs had chased him; the raven, the tomtit, and the cock had mocked him; and he was feeling worried and hungry.

Where does he meet Tibert? is he going to eat him?

Oh, Tibert is not so easily caught, for he can defend himself with his sharp claws. When Reynard met him at a turn in the road, Tibert was very happy. He was jumping about, and chasing his tail round and round.

Did the cat run away when he saw Reynard?

The moment he recognized him he leaped in the air, and then stood on his four feet, looking at Reynard. Whether it was out of respect for Reynard, or to defend himself, the story does not tell us. In either case he was polite. "Sire," he said, "you are welcome!"—"Sir," answered Reynard bluntly, "I did not speak to you. I would advise you to be careful how you come near me, for I never see you that I do not hope it may be for the last time."—"My lord," said Tibert, "it distresses me to hear you speak so, and to know that you have such a bad opinion of me."

Tibert was afraid Reynard would attack him.

I do not know whether he was afraid or not, but Reynard certainly did not attack him; no doubt he wished to do it, but was not sure of his success. He noticed that Tibert was large and strong, that his claws were long, and his teeth sharp. So he changed his tone. Listen to what he says. "Friend Tibert, I have some news to tell you. I have undertaken a terrible war against our friend Isegrim. Would you like to join my army? I have already several valiant soldiers. Isegrim is rich; we shall find much booty."

I hope Tibert refused.

Why should he refuse, Alice?

Because I am afraid Reynard was planning some trick. I should be very anxious if I saw our puss start off with that deceitful creature.

Do not trouble yourself about Tibert; he accepts, but he will be on his guard. "Sire," he said, "you may count on me, on my sharp teeth and pointed claws. For I, too, have a little affair to settle with Isegrim." After this conversation, the two warriors mounted their horses and started off, apparently the best friends in the world.

They only appeared to be friends?

That is all, Alice. In reality they disliked each other intensely; and each was only wait-

ing an opportunity to play some trick on the other.

Which of the two had the first occasion?

Which do you think, George?

Reynard. — No, I guess it was Tibert; for he would not wish to travel in such company any longer than he could help, and would not care to go too far away from his home.

Those are very good reasons in favor of Tibert, George; but you are mistaken. Reynard saw the first chance, and improved it.

Oh, poor Tibert!

Wait until you hear the end of the story; perhaps you will say, poor Reynard.

Oh, I wonder which of them was the most cunning.

You will soon find out. As they were riding along the path at the edge of the wood, Reynard's sharp eyes noticed a noose hanging from the branch of a tree, placed there by the hunters to catch a hare, a rabbit, or perhaps a fox.

What is a noose?

If I had some cord, I would show you how it is arranged.

Here is a piece.

Thank you, Arthur. Look! I make a sliding knot; put your finger in the little circle, George; — pull!

Oh! oh!

You are caught, you see. That is the way Reynard or Tibert would be caught if they put their heads in the noose. We shall see which will be the first one to be caught. Reynard saw the noose, and said,—"Tibert, my friend, I would like to know the speed of your horse. Do you see this narrow path which runs along by the side of the wood? Follow this path exactly in front of you, at full speed."—"Willingly," answered Tibert, who suspected nothing. He started off, and in the twinkling of an eye was before the trap.

Was he caught?

No; he saw it just in time, drew his horse back, and in an instant leaped to the other side.

Bravo! bravo! Reynard did not eateh him.

That is not all, children.

Tibert is out of danger, because he has seen the trap.

That is true. Reynard saw it also, yet one of them was eaught.

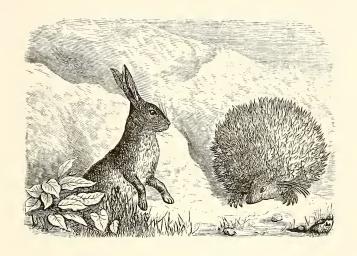
How did it happen?

I will tell you. The two companions had stopped. Reynard insisted that Tibert's horse was a poor one, a horse that did not know enough to run straight ahead. Tibert made

many excuses, and offered to try again; but while they were disputing, two great dogs came racing towards them. Reynard, frightened, forgot every thing, and ran directly into the trap. At this moment Tibert jumped upon his back, uttering fearful cries; but poor Reynard was caught and could not move. "Good-by, Sir Reynard; good-by, my excellent friend," cried the joyful Tibert. "I carry in my heart the pleasure of having deceived the deceiver. Remember in the future your wise friend Tibert, and be more prudent."

Poor Reynard!

He merited the lesson, my children.



XXII.

THE HARE AND THE HEDGE-HOG.

D^{ID} you ever see a hedge-hog, Mary?

If you should ever meet one, do not caress him as you do your puss.

Will he scratch?

He neither scratches nor bites. But do you see those long, stiff quills on his back?

How queer they look!

Those are his weapons. His hair is all needles.

Be very careful, my dear children, and never go near him.

No, indeed. We should never dare touch him.

One beautiful summer morning, a hedge-hog was standing before his door. The sun shone brightly; the soft wind gently swayed the green grain to and fro. The robins sang cheerily in the trees, the bees buzzed noisily about the flowers, and the crickets chirruped among the red clover. All of God's creatures were joyous, and the hedge-hog was very happy that morning.

What was he doing at his door?

He was thinking how fast time flies, and was singing a little song, — a hedge-hog's song. All at once he had an idea.

A hedge-hog's idea?

Yes, George; ideas come in leisure hours, when one has nothing to do. His wife was busy, washing and dressing the children; so he said to himself, — "I will take a walk in the fields and see how my turnips are getting along." Cows and hedge-hogs are very fond of turnips.

Did the hedge-hog have any turnips?

They belonged to the farmer; but the hedgehog's house was near the farm, and, as he and his wife and children were in the habit of eating them every day, he called them *his* turnips. Off he started in the fields. He had only gone a few steps when he met a fine gentleman.

The farmer?

No, a four-footed gentleman.

The great farm-dog?

No.

Was it a cat?

No; it was a hare. "Good morning, my fine companion," said the hedge-hog, "good morning, my light-footed friend." The hare was rather vexed at such familiarity, and did not return the hedge-hog's salute, but said to him in a mocking tone, - "How happens it that you, too, are running through the fields this fine morning?"—"I am out for a walk," answered the hedge-hog. "For a walk!" replied the hare, laughing. "The idea of such crooked legs walking."

What an insult!

But it was true, for the hedge-hog's legs were crooked; and because it was true, the hedge-hog was very angry. His crooked legs were the only trial of his life.

What did he say to the hare?

He challenged him to a race.

What an idea! Why, the hare can run faster than any of the animals.

True, George, and the hare thought the

hedge-hog was mocking him; but the hedgehog insisted, and wagered a fine gold dollar that he would run faster than the hare.

He will lose his gold dollar.

No, Mary; thanks to his cunning genius, he will win from the hare.

How could that be possible?

Wait, and I will tell you. The hedge-hog told the hare that he would like to return home and eat lunch before running. The hare consented to wait. But it was only a trick; he wanted to see his wife.

Why?

Listen to what he said. "Wife, dress your-self quickly, for you must come into the fields with me."—"What for?" said the wife. "I have wagered a gold dollar with the hare that I will run faster than he, and I need you to aid me."—"You run a race with the hare! Have you lost your senses?"—"Silence, wife," said the master of the house; "do not trouble yourself with what only concerns me; dress yourself, and let us start."

The hedge-hog commanded like a king.

Yes, indeed. On the way, this king of the hedge-hogs said to his queen, — "Here is the field before us. The hare will run in one furrow, and I in another. We shall start from the other

side. You will hide yourself in my furrow on this side of the field. When the hare reaches you, show yourself boldly and cry out, — Here I am!"

I see how the hedge-hog's wit gained him the victory.

Yes, my boy; his head was worth more than his legs. When the hedge-hog reached the hare, they started off together. "One, two, three!" said the hare, and away he went like the wind. See how he flies! — And the hedge-hog! He took three steps, then stood quietly in the furrow, holding his sides with laughter; for he could hear his wife crying from the other end of the field, — "Here I am! here I am!"

The hare must have been astonished.

He was stupefied; he could not believe his eyes. He wished to commence over again. The hedge-hogs, who had nothing to do but say in turn, "Here I am!" were not fatigued, and consented. They commenced seventy-five times, and seventy-five times the hare was shamefully beaten. George, do you find any lesson in this story?

Hares ought not to race with hedge-hogs.

And what else?

They should not laugh at the hedge-hog's crooked legs.

And again?

When they run with the hedge-hogs, they should be sure that it is the same one that cries, "Here I am!" each time.

But if they both look alike?

Then the hares will always be beaten. They must be more modest, and let the hedge-hogs walk in peace.



XXIII.

ANECDOTES OF ANIMALS.

SHALL I tell you about the dog to-day, children?

Oh, yes. He is such an intelligent and faithful animal that we like to hear about him.

He is indeed intelligent. I have seen him reason as clearly as a person.

That does not seem possible.

Why not? Did you ever see a dog hunt for his master?

Yes, he scents his track. That is not reasoning.

Let me tell you what I saw a dog do once, and you will see how he reasoned. This dog had lost his master, but he scented his track, and went trotting along the road, hoping to overtake him. Suddenly he came to a place where the roads crossed. There were three roads in front of him. What do you think he did, George?

He scented the three roads, and when he found his master's track, took that one.

He would have done so, had he not reasoned with himself. He scented the first road, and the second; then, without stopping, went racing down the third.

Had his master taken the third road?

Certainly. The dog probably said to himself,
—"I have followed my master as far as these
three roads, and he must have gone on one of
them. He did not take the first; neither did
he take the second; consequently, he must have
taken the third." And away he went, sure
of finding his master.

The dog must have reasoned.

Yes, my children. Did you-ever see a dog leading a blind person?

Never.

I have, many a time, and always watch the dog with respect and admiration. The noble animal is full of devotion to his master; his eyes are for him alone; all his thoughts are given to him. Should you ever see such a dog coming towards you, turn aside and do not make him stop.

He would turn aside himself, if I were to meet him.

No, indeed. He understands his duty; he knows that his master is infirm, and that you are young. He would oblige you to yield to his master.

I would certainly do so.

That is right, my boy. Watch how he looks to the right and to the left, attentive to every thing, and guarding his poor master who has lost his sight. See him trot along, threading his way between carriages and wagons, avoiding the narrow paths, keeping always on the broad walk where he knows his master will be free from danger, never for a moment thinking of himself. Good little creature! Is he not a faithful friend?

Yes, indeed!

Do you not think him the most intelligent and the most devoted of all the animals?

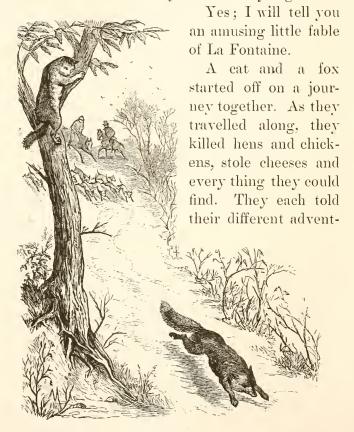
He is the most devoted and faithful, but the cat is as intelligent.

Do you think so, Louise?

Yes, and more cunning.

True; the cat is like the fox, cunning and deceitful; but the dog is brave and honest.

Can you not tell us another story about the cat and the fox? They are so funny together.



ures, laughing at the various tricks they had played, but finally they began to dispute. "You think yourself pretty sharp," said the fox, "but I am much more cunning than you; I know a hundred wily tricks." — "That is a great many," answered the cat; "I know only one, but I would rather have that than a thousand others." On this point they could not agree. They contradicted each other until they nearly came to blows. Suddenly a pack of hounds appeared. "Where are your hundred tricks?" said the cat; "as for me, this is mine;" and up he climbed into a tree in an instant. There he sat triumphant, laughing at the fox, who, after trying in vain to escape, was finally caught by the dogs and killed. — One good expedient in time of danger is worth a hundred poor ones.

The cat knew more than the fox that time.

Yes, Mary. But here is another little fable wherein the cat was caught.

Oh, how? Do tell us.

One day a cat and a monkey were sitting together in front of the fire, where some chestnuts were roasting. The two friends looked at them with longing eyes. "My brother," said the monkey, "you are more skilful than I; take some of those chestnuts out of the fire, and we will make a nice breakfast." The cat carefully raises her paw, pushes aside the ashes, and quickly draws out the chestnuts, one by one. The monkey seizes them as fast as they fall upon the floor, and eats them; the poor cat has not a single one.

What a selfish monkey!

Very selfish; but the cat ought to have been wise enough to save some for himself.

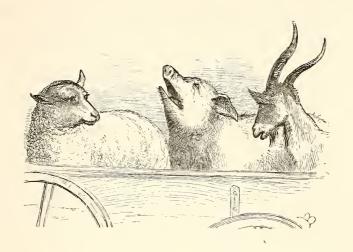
I think it must have been a young cat.

Without experience?

Yes.

I think so, too, my dears.





XXIV.

THE HOG, THE GOAT, AND THE SHEEP.

WILL tell you another fable to-day, children. Is it by La Fontaine?
Yes; do you like his fables?
Oh, very much.
Very well; listen, and I will read it.

THE HOG, THE GOAT, AND THE SHEEP.

A goat, a sheep, and porker fat,
All to the market rode together.
Their own amusement was not that
Which caused their journey thither.

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Their coachman did not mean to "set them down". To see the shows and wonders of the town.

The porker cried, in piereing squeals,
As if with butchers at his heels.
The other beasts, of milder mood,
The cause by no means understood.
They saw, no harm, and wondered why
At such a rate the hog should cry.
"Hush there, old piggy," said the man,
"And keep as quiet as you can.
What wrong have you to squeal about,
And raise this fiendish deafening shout?
These stiller persons at your side
Have manners much more dignified.

Pray, have you heard A single word

Come from that gentleman in wool?

That proves him wise." "It proves him fool,"

The testy hog replied; "For, did he know To what we go,

He'd cry almost to split his throat; So would her ladyship, the goat. They only think to lose with ease, The goat her milk, the sheep his fleece: They're, maybe, right; but, as for me,

This ride is quite another matter. Of service only on a platter, My death is quite a certainty. Adieu, my dear old piggery!" The porker's logic proved at once Himself a prophet and a dunce.

THE HOG, THE GOAT, AND THE SHEEP. 131

Hope ever gives a present ease,
But fear beforehand kills;
The wisest he who least foresees
Inevitable ills.

How many animals were in the cart, Arthur? Three.

Where were they going?

To the market.

Were they going there to have a good time? Not at all.

Was the hog quiet as he rode along?

He squealed and made a terrible noise.

Did the goat and the sheep make a noise, too? They were very quiet.

Did they know where they were going? Oh, no.

Did the hog know where the man was taking them?

He thought he knew all about it.

Did the man like the noise the hog made?

He could not endure it; he told him to stop.

What did the man say of the goat and the sheep?

He said that they behaved well, and told the hog to follow their example.

Did the hog obey?

He squealed all the louder, and said they would cry too, if they only knew what was going to happen to them.

What do you think about it, George?

I think the hog was right. The goat and the sheep would have cried too, if they had known where they were going.

Did they know what their fate would be when they reached the market?

They ought to have known that the man did not put them in the cart to give them a ride, just for pleasure.

How should they know?

Had they not seen their brothers and sisters go away in the cart many a time?

Yes.

And they had never seen them come back. They must have been stupid, not to know they were never to see their home again.

Oh, my little George, how happy piggy would have been, had he heard you plead his cause! and how unhappy it would have made the other animals! But think a little. Are you sure they will kill the sheep? Perhaps they are going to sell him to another master. Is there no service the sheep could render if he should live?

His wool is worth a great deal.

And what do you think of the goat?

They could sell the goat, too, for her milk.

And the hog?

The hog could do nothing; he ought to die.

Do you still think the hog was the wisest? No, I have changed my mind.

What is your opinion now?

I think the hog was right to ery, and the goat and the sheep were also wise to keep quiet.

That is better, my boy. All three would be delighted with your judgment. But La Fontaine does not agree with you.

Oh, I hope so.

No; read the moral of the fable, my boy, and you will see that the poet condemns the hog. Poor piggy was going to die, my children. It made him very unhappy to know it, for he enjoyed his life. But what could he do to save himself? Neither complaints, fears, nor cries could rescue him. Would it not have been better to have imitated the example of the goat and the sheep?

I think he would have been happier.



XXV.

REYNARD'S CONFESSION.

CAN you not tell us another story about the fox?

If you wish; Reynard had many funny adventures.

Do tell us something more about him, he is such a comical fellow.

Very well, I will tell you a curious adventure he had; and you will see how his wit and cunning saved his life.

We will be very attentive.

Reynard committed so many faults, that finally the Lion sentenced him to death. As they were about to lead him to the gallows, he asked the king's permission to make a public confession. "It is better," he said, with a serious look which affected the judges and the crowd, "that all should hear the story of my misdeeds; for then, in the future no one can be accused of faults that I have committed." — "Speak," said the king, "your request is granted." Reynard, standing in front of his judges, looked around him with a mournful air, then said in a loud voice, - "Unfortunate that I am! I see no one here, friend or foe, whom I have not offended. But I pray you listen, you who have condemned me to death; and I will tell you how I, the unhappy fox, first learned to be so wicked. In my youth, I was good and kind; all day long I played with the pretty lambs. Their sweet voices charmed me. One day, in playing, I chanced to bite one, and the taste of its blood pleased me so well that I also ate its flesh. That experience gave me such a desire for the dainty food, that I ran to the woods the moment I heard the voice of a sheep or a goat. But little by little, I became more rash and wicked, killing hens and chickens, birds and geese, wherever I could find them. At length I became so cruel and unmerciful that I devoured every thing that came in my way."

Reynard did not seem to be afraid to die.

Do you think that he was executed, Alice?

How could be escape after such a daring confession?

He did escape.

We cannot imagine how; was he not very guilty?

Yes, but he was very bold also.

Perhaps he repented, and the king pardoned him.

You could never expect that; if he should live, he would return to his old tricks the very next day.

Did he save himself by his wit?

Yes; his cunning genius saved him, and even raised him in the king's favor.

How did he manage to escape?

"I have been very guilty," he said, "to rob others, for I have plenty of my own. I am rich enough to pay for all I want. I possess more gold and silver than twenty carts could carry."

—"What do you say, Reynard? where is this treasure you speak of?" said the king. "Sire, I will confess all; not one of my crimes shall remain hidden; this treasure of which I speak, was stolen."

The fox was not very bright to confess that he stole the treasure; he condemned himself more and more.

Do not interrupt, George; you have not heard all that Reynard said. Listen.—"It is true my treasure was stolen; but, had it not been stolen, your majesty's life would have been attempted."—"Alas! dear Reynard," said the queen, in great dismay, "what is it that you are speaking of? I command you on your conscience to tell us the truth of this affair. Say quickly, if you know of any conspiracy or plot against the life of my lord and husband."—Do you still think that the fox was executed?

No; we see the trick. But there was no conspiracy against the king; that was not true, was it?

No, indeed.

Was Reynard rich?

I doubt it; if the truth were known, I think we should find him exceedingly poor.

Did the king make him show his treasure?

One might think so, but wait. Listen to what he said: "Know, my king, that one time my father, by accident turning up the ground, found a great treasure. His riches gave him such an influence over the other animals of the kingdom, that he was tempted to abuse it. He entered into a conspiracy with Bruin the bear, and Isegrim the wolf, to dethrone your majesty. I discovered the plot, and resolved to defeat it. I said to myself, — If the king perishes, Bruin will govern us. I knew Bruin to be as false, wicked, and full of evil, as I know your majesty to be noble of heart. I prayed that my sovereign might be spared, and I passed my days and nights in searching for my father's treasure. I watched every step he took, — in the woods, in the hedges, and in the open fields. At last, in spite of his cunning, I discovered where it was hidden, and with the aid of Ermelin, my wife, carried it to another place, where we deposited it safe from every human eye. My father became desperate on discovering that his treasure had been stolen, and hanged himself on the nearest tree. Thus, by my skill, was this terrible treason defeated; and for this I am now about to lose my life, while those two traitors, Bruin and Isegrim, sit in the king's privy council."— Do you not pity him, children?

No; we know what an impostor Reynard is. But the king did not suspect the ruse. He was greatly affected, and the queen was moved to tears.

Was there really any treasure?

We will see. Reynard gave the king a straw as a pledge of his surrender of the whole property. — "Where is this treasure?" said the king. "At Crekenpit." — "Crekenpit! Where, pray, is Crekenpit? I have heard of a great many places, but never one with such a name." — "Does your majesty doubt my word? do you wish it proved? Kayward, come here, and answer truly the questions I shall ask you."

Who was Kayward?

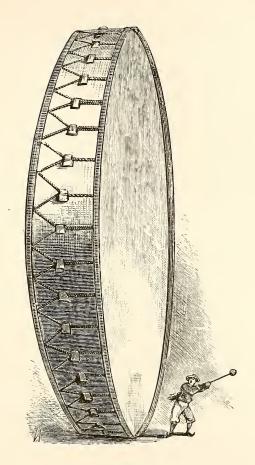
Kayward was the hare. He came towards the fox, trembling with fear. "Are you cold," said Reynard, "that you tremble so? Fear nothing, and speak the truth before the king. Do you know where Crekenpit stands?"—"Yes," replied Kayward; "it stands in a wood called Husterloe, amidst a vast and wild wilderness, where I have suffered much from hunger and cold." Reynard triumphantly turned to the king and said, "My lord, do you still doubt my word?"—"No, Reynard; excuse my suspicion. I was wrong to distrust you."

But that was no proof of the existence of such a place as Crekenpit.

No, Alice; do you believe it?

No; I think Kayward told the falsehood from fear. The king was very easily imposed upon.

True, my dear; but you did not hear Reynard himself. I am sure he was very eloquent, making it difficult to doubt his word. It is easy to believe what we desire to be true, and the king was very anxious for the treasure.



XXVI.

THE KING OF INDIA AND HIS GREAT DRUM.

I AM going to tell you a fable to-day, children, which is neither by La Fontaine nor any other French poet.

Is it by an American?

No.

An Englishman?

You must guess again.

Is it one of Æsop's fables?

Ah, I am afraid you cannot guess.

Is it a Chinese fable?

It is neither a Chinese nor a Japanese fable. Will you give it up?

Yes; we can never guess.

Well, the fable of the King of India and his Great Drum is an Indian fable.

Oh, do tell it to us; we will listen with both our ears.

The king of India had a strange idea.

What was it?

Wait, George; you are more impatient than a little girl.

You make me curious.

So much the better, my boy, for you will be more attentive. This is the strange idea the King of India had:—

Oh, do be quick and tell us.

You would have known already, if you had not interrupted me.

But I cannot wait. Was it a drum he wanted? That was just the thing; but he did not want a small one.

Did he want one as large as the great drum of the Boston Jubilee?

Larger than that. Listen to what the King of India said to his ministers: - "My beloved and obedient subjects, I am very desirous of having a large drum, one that can be heard for fifty miles about, and that will resound throughout my kingdom. Is there any one among you able to make such a drum?"—"It is impossible, Sire," answered the ministers. "No such word as *impossible* must be used in my kingdom," said the king, irritated. The frightened ministers looked at one another in consternation, not daring to raise their eyes. Presently a high officer of the court, who was devoted to his sovereign, advanced and said to him, —"I can make the drum that you wish, but it will cost a great deal." — "Will it be heard by my subjects fifty miles from here?"— "They will hear it even farther than that," answered the officer. "Admirable!" cried the king. "Take all my riches. I willingly give whatever treasure I possess for the drum I have resolved to have."

We long to know how he made the great drum.

Oh, little daughters of Eve! you are full of curiosity.

Boys have as much as we do.

True, little one. Well, the drum was heard to the very remotest part of India.

How was that possible?

I will tell you what the officer did. He took all the gold and silver, and the precious jewels in the royal treasury, and had them carried to the gate of the palace.

Did he sell them?

Oh, no. He published the following proclamation throughout the empire: — "His Majesty, the King of India, wishing to prove his love for his loyal subjects, desires this day to distribute among them his royal favors. Let all the poor and unfortunate hasten to the gate of the palace."

But we do not hear the drum.

Yet it resounded far and near. From every corner of the kingdom, the poor and needy hastened with sacks on their backs to the gate of the palace. The towns and villages were throughd with people, who did nothing but talk of the great riches they were to have, and the kindness of the king. Do you see the Great Drum?

Not at all; where is it?

You will soon see. At the end of a year his majesty asked if the great drum was finished.

— "It is ready," the officer answered. "But

I have not heard it." — "Sire," said the officer, "take a journey throughout your kingdom, and your Majesty will hear the sound of the drum, for it resounds everywhere." The king immediately mounted, his chariot, and travelled over his kingdom. Wherever he went, the people thronged about him, shouting, "Long live the king! long live the king!" "Where does this immense crowd of my subjects come from?" asked the delighted king. "Sire," answered the officer, "I have distributed the riches of the royal treasury among them. That is the great drum I promised to my king; your Majesty's benevolence is proclaimed by all the inhabitants of India, while your praises resound for thousands of miles." — "You are a brave subject," replied the king; "from this time forth you will be my prime minister."

That was grand. We never imagined that kind of drum.

Is there a better kind than that of benevolence?

No, indeed.

Kings are loved for their kindness and charity; are they not?

Yes; good kings are always loved.

Are not men whose deeds are good, generally loved?

Yes; we cannot help loving them.

Which would you prefer, — a man who makes himself known by a great noise, or one whose kind acts speak for him?

Oh, we prefer the latter.

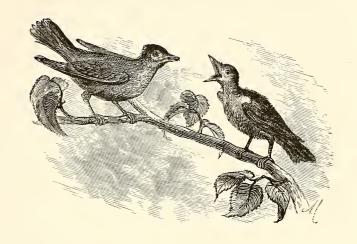
Do you all think so?

Yes, indeed.

You are right, children. 'And how do you like the officer?

We admire him for his noble idea.

Yes; and we will all cry, "Long live the king!" because he honored the officer, and made him his prime minister.



XXVII.

ANECDOTES.

CAN you not tell me an anecdote to-day, children?

Oh, we like so much better to hear you.

Very well; I will begin, and you can tell me one afterwards. Are you fond of birds?

Very fond of them.

Then I will tell you a story of some little birds, that a celebrated woman in France has written about in the history of her life. Who is it?

She is called George Sand. When you are older, you will be able to read the book for yourselves. George Sand had two black-caps that were great pets of hers.

What is a black-cap?

It is a little bird smaller than a nightingale, and larger than a robin. It has a little black crown on the top of its head, and sings so sweetly that it is often called the black-cap warbler. George Sand loved her little birds, and they loved her in return. One of them was two weeks older than the other.

Two weeks is not a great difference.

It is not much for you, Louise; but two weeks for a bird is as much as two years for a person. The name of the one was Jonquil, the other was called Agatha. Jonquil was very small; her feathers were not fully grown. She could not fly, and hopped with difficulty from one place to another.

Could she feed herself?

No, her mistress had spoiled her; for the moment her bill was opened, she was offered something to eat.

She was a lazy little bird.

Birds are like little children, and require constant care.

What did Agatha do?

She was very naughty. She did nothing but chirp and hop about, and was always restless and troublesome, — a great torment to poor little Jonquil, who finally began to think seriously about it.

How could she think?

She must have been thinking very seriously. She would stand on one foot, with her head buried between her shoulders, and with eyes half closed, as if she were meditating with all her might.

What an idea!

You are right, George. 1 ought not to give too much honor to a little bird that could not feed itself, but was always ready to eat. Whenever George Sand came near, she would open her bill, as if to say, "I am so hungry!" One day, however, Jonquil distinguished herself.

What did she do?

I will tell you. Her mistress was sitting in her library, writing. She had placed at a little distance from her table, the green branch on which the two little birds were perched. Agatha, whose feathers were not yet grown, was nestling close to Jonquil to keep herself warm, and thus they quietly remained for about half an hour. But then they began to feel hungry. Jonquil

hopped upon a chair, then upon the table; Agatha flapped her wings, opened her bill, and uttered the most despairing cries.

Little rogues! Of course they had what they wanted at once.

Not at all, my dear. On the contrary, their mistress said in a very stern and decided tone: "Jonquil, you are a troublesome little bird; I cannot have these teasing ways any longer. You are old enough to feed yourself. There is your food directly under your bill, and I shall not humor your laziness any more."

What did Jonquil do?

She was very much offended. She hopped about, chirping fretfully.

And Agatha?

She appealed to her sister with loud and constant cries, and her distressed voice at last affected Jonquil.

What did she do?

Suddenly she made up her mind. With one jump she reached the dish of food, and standing over it, commenced to open her bill and chirp.

Did she think the food would go into her bill of itself?

It seemed so.

Did she not eat any thing?

No, my children; and you will soon see how kind and generous she was.

Why?

She forgot her own hunger, and thought only of poor little Agatha, who was very hungry, but could get nothing to eat. For the first time in her life, she filled her little bill with food; then, instead of eating it herself, hopped back to Agatha and gave it to her. From that day Jonquil not only fed herself, but took all the care of her little sister.

That is a very pretty story.

It is your turn now, children. Who will tell me one?

My mother told me a funny little story the other day, about some ants.

Let us hear it, George.

One day mamma was sitting at a table, writing. The room was very quiet. All at once she heard a slight noise in the cupboard. "That cannot be a mouse," she said; "the noise is not loud enough."

She could scarcely hear it; could she, George? No, she said it was almost nothing at all. Still it was a noise, and she could not write.

I wonder what it was! It may have been the wind blowing against the window.

I said the noise came from the cupboard.

The cupboard is opposite the windows; the wind could do nothing there.

What was it then?

Mamma searched in vain for an hour, and could not discover it.

Did she not find any thing?

Oh, how impatient you are!

Yes, my boy; I am eager to know.

Good! You must never say again that little girls are curious.

Oh, George! you are unmerciful.

No; for I am going to tell you all about it. Mamma opened the cupboard door several times.

What was in the cupboard?

I told you there was a noise.

What else?

Three shelves.

Were books on the shelves?

No, indeed. It was a cupboard; plates and dishes were kept there.

I understand. With the dishes, your mamma kept her cake, pies, sugar, and such things; did she not?

There was some sugar; and what else, do you think?

A mouse was eating the sugar.

Oh, no; you do not remember what I said at the very beginning.

What, George?

I said that the mysterious noise was too slight to come from a mouse.

Oh, George, we are on thorns. Why do you not tell us what it was?

I cannot help
enjoying your
impatience;
but I will be
good and tell
you. On the highest shelf
of the cupboard there was a
paper of sugar. Mamma
found the paper half open,
and—she found something
else.

What Coorgo?

What, George?

She saw several grains of sugar on the floor, and — something besides. What do you think?

Oh, we give it up, George. She found—not a mouse!

George, George! you have no pity

on us.

Did I not say that my

story was about the ants? Well, my mamma found two armies of ants in the cupboard.

And what were they doing there?

The ants on the shelf had opened the paper of sugar, and were carrying the grains to the very edge and dropping them, one by one, on the floor.

And the ants on the floor?

They carried them away.

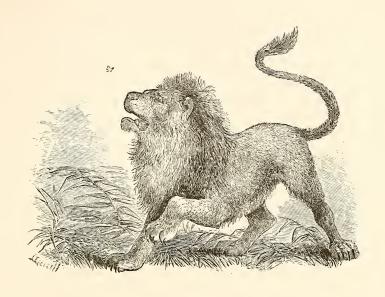
Where?

I do not know.

To their home, probably. The little ants were laying in a stock of provisions for a rainy day. That is an excellent story, George; but you nearly made me wild with impatience before you finished. To-morrow, children, I will tell you a fable.

Is it an Indian fable?

No; it is a French fable, by the celebrated poet, La Fontaine.



XXVIII.

THE LION AND THE GNAT.

HAVE you ever seen a lion, George? Yes; I saw two great lions at the menagerie.

Were you afraid of them?

Oh, no. They were lying quiet by the side of each other on the bottom of the cage; their eyes were half closed, and they looked very sleepy. My mamma said they looked sad.

I am very sure they were sad, my boy. No doubt they were thinking of their lost liberty, and the grand old forest where they once went bounding among the trees, chasing the wild game; they could still hear, in imagination, the thunder of their own voices echoed by the lofty mountains; and their fierce battles with the tigers and the panthers, their hard-won victories, all came back to them.

The lions of the menagerie must be very unhappy.

Yes, my dear. They lose their grandeur, their quickness, and their force. The terrible lions of the woods would never recognize their wretched brothers of the menagerie. You know that the lion is the strongest of all the animals; he is the king.

Yes; all the other animals fear the lion.

True; but I know of a proud and strong lion that was attacked by a little insect, a gnat, that declared war against him.

The gnat must have been very rash and very foolish to attack a lion; for the lion could conquer all the gnats in the world.

Do you think so, George? Very well. Listen to the story of the combat between the gnat and the king of the forest. It is La Fontaine who relates the adventure.

THE LION AND THE GNAT.

"Go, paltry insect, nature's meanest brat!" Thus said the royal lion to the gnat. The gnat declared immediate war.

"Think you," said he, "your royal name To me worth caring for?

Think you I tremble at your power or fame?
The ox is bigger far than you;
Yet him I drive, and all his crew."
This said, as one that did no fear owe,
Himself he blew the battle charge,

Himself both trumpeter and hero.

At first, he played about at large, Then on the lion's neck, at leisure, settled, And there the royal beast full sorely nettled.

With foaming mouth, and flashing eye, He roars. All creatures hide or fly,—

Such mortal terror at
The work of one poor gnat!
With constant change of his attack,
The snout now stinging, now the back,
And now the chambers of the nose;
The pigmy fly no mercy shows.
The lion's rage was at its height;
His viewless foe now laughed outright,
When on his battle-ground, he saw
That every savage tooth and claw

Had got its proper beauty
By doing bloody duty;
Himself, the hapless lion, tore his hide,
And lashed with sounding tail from side to side.

Ah! bootless blow, and bite, and curse!
He beat the harmless air, and worse;
For, though so fierce and stout,
By effort wearied out,
He fainted, fell, gave up the quarrel.
The gnat retires with verdant laurel.
Now rings his trumpet clang

As at the charge it rang.

But, while his triumph note he blows,
Straight on our valiant conqueror goes
A spider's ambuscade to meet,
And make its web his winding-sheet.

We often have the most to fear From those we most despise; Again, great risks a man may clear, Who by the smallest dies.

Do you understand the fable?

Yes; the lion was conquered because the gnat had wings.

Did he fight with them?

He had his sting for a weapon; but, thanks to his wings, he escaped from the lion.

Yes, he had both sting and wings; he had also the advantage of being very small. The lion was angry to have such a small insect for an enemy; was he not?

Very angry; for the gnat stung him even in his nose.

That was the last blow:—

"The lion's rage was at its height;
His viewless foe now laughed outright; . . .
Himself, the hapless lion, tore his hide,
And lashed with sounding tail from side to side. . . .
By effort wearied out,
He fainted, fell, gave up the quarrel.
The gnat retires with verdant laurel."

What a glorious day for the brave insect! The king of beasts had insulted him; had called him "paltry insect, nature's meanest brat!" Wounded in his pride, he defied the power of the king, declared war against him and gained the victory. Was he not happy?

Yes, but his happiness did not last long.

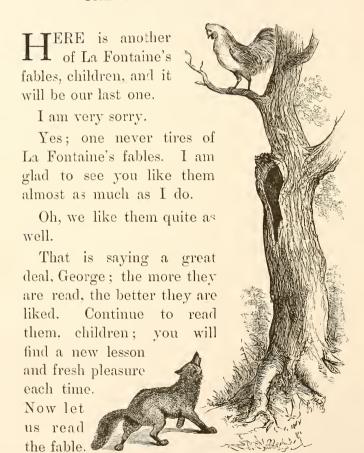
What happened to him?

He was so delighted with his success, that he became heedless and did not see a spider's web, until he flew into it and was caught.

My dear children, do not forget this little story. The lion was punished for his pride; he despised a poor little insect that was happily buzzing about in the bright sunlight. The gnat also was punished for forgetting to be prudent in the joy of his triumph.

XXIX.

THE COCK AND THE FOX.



THE COCK AND THE FOX.

Upon a tree there mounted guard
A veteran cock, adroit and cunning,
When to the roots a fox up running
Spoke thus, in tones of kind regard ·—
"Our quarrel, brother, 's at an end;
Henceforth I hope to live your friend;
For peace now reigns
Throughout the animal domains.

I bear the news. — Come down, I pray, And give me the embrace fraternal; And please, my brother, don't delay; So much the tidings do concern all, That I must spread them far to-day.

Now you and yours can take your walks Without a fear or thought of hawks.

And should you clash with them or others,
In us you'll find the best of brothers;

For which you may, this joyful night, Your merry bonfires light.

But, first, let's seal the bliss
With one fraternal kiss."
"Good friend," the cock replied, "upon my word,
A better thing I never heard;

And doubly I rejoice
To hear it from your voice;

And, really, there must be something in it. For yonder come two greyhounds, which, I flatter Myself, are couriers on this very matter. They come so fast, they'll be here in a minute; I'll down, and all of us will seal the blessing
With general kissing and caressing."

"Adieu," said fox; "my errand's pressing;
I'll hurry on my way,

And we'll rejoice some other day." So off the fellow scampered, quick and light, To gain the fox-holes of a neighboring height, Less happy in his stratagem than flight.

The cock laughed sweetly in his sleeve; 'Tis doubly sweet, deceiver to deceive.

Where was the cock when the fox saw him? On a tree.

Was he not fortunate to be there instead of on the ground?

Yes, for the fox could not reach him.

The fox began the conversation; what did he say?

He said that peace had been declared throughout the animal kingdom.

Was not the cock delighted to hear such good news?

He must have been very happy; he would no longer be obliged to mount guard in the farm-yard, but would be able to wander through the fields as much as he liked.

Then you think he was pleased? He would have been, had he believed the fox. Why should he doubt him? The cock knew the fox might be trying to deceive him.

Did he refuse to give the kiss of peace?

No; but he did better than that.

What did he do?

He laughed at the fox, for he had a good chance.

Yes, indeed. The arrival of the two grey-hounds gave him a fine opportunity, and he did not lose it. As soon as he saw them, he cried as loud as he could, "Here are two couriers coming to bring the same news; they run so fast, they will be here in a minute; I will come down instantly, and we can have a general rejoicing."

Did they kiss each other?

Most surely not. The fox did not wait for the greyhounds, but took to his heels as fast as he could go.

I guess the cock laughed to see him run.

He nearly died of laughter.

He was as sly as the fox that time.

Yes; "'Tis doubly sweet the deceiver to deceive," the poet says. This fable makes me think of one of Reynard's adventures.

With a cock?

Not at all; with quite another kind of bird. But it was about the peace among the animals, and Reynard again claimed to be the messenger.

What was the bird called?

It was a little titmouse or tomtit, a bird so small that it would only make one mouthful for Reynard; but such a sweet mouthful!

Poor little bird!

Do not be alarmed, children; the titmouse was a bright little creature and not without experience. Like the cock, she was on the branch of a tree. Her nest and little ones were in the trunk of the tree. Her love for them made her prudent. Reynard approached and said, "Come down, my friend, I pray; I wait to receive from you the kiss of peace." — "Give you a kiss!" answered the bird. "that would be very pleasant, if one did not know well your deceitful tricks."

Hurrah for the titmouse! She did not mean to be caught.

No; but Reynard was not discouraged. "I have never been your enemy; at least let me tell you the good news that I bring. Our noble sovereign, the lion, has proclaimed peace throughout the kingdom. The time of disputes and quarrels is over. Every one is joyful; come then, and give me a kiss. Have no fear; while you kiss me, I will close my eyes."

Reynard makes us laugh.

No wonder! The titmouse laughed, too.

What did she do?

She took a little tuft of moss, and dropped it on Reynard's beard.

Did he think it was the bird?

Yes; and when he felt it, he sprang to seize her. "Ah! ah! that is your kiss of peace," she cried, from the top of the tree. Reynard tried to persuade her that he only jumped to frighten her, and begged that she would kiss him in earnest.

Did she do it?

No; the story finishes like the fable. The hunters and the dogs came running towards them, and Reynard, with his tail between his legs, ran as fast as he could go.

Why does he put his tail between his legs?

Do you not know? His tail is in danger when the dogs are chasing him; for it is so long and large that they can easily seize it with their teeth.

We understand.

You see the titmouse had as good a chance as the cock to laugh at the fox. The most cunning deceivers are often defeated, and then there is joy for those that have been their dupes.



XXX.

THE BIRDS OF HEAVEN.

I HAVE reserved for our last lesson, my children, a pretty little poem about the birds.

THE BIRDS OF HEAVEN.

Birdies, how sweet your song!
I could hear it all my days,
But mayhap I hear it wrong,
What is it that birdie says?

Oh, we sing about the flowers
And the mountains and the groves,
And these chirrupings of ours
Are the echo of our loves.

Who taught your skill divine,
Ye dwellers in the bushes?
Whence comes the rapture fine
Through all your song that gushes?

See you the nests in there,
Forth from the leafage peeping, —
Where, safe in mother's care,
Our little ones are sleeping?

Alas, my birdies wee,
The village children play
Under that very tree;
They will steal your nests away.

Oh, never you fear, good friend!
Thick is the leafage green,
And well doth it defend
The palaces within!

Yet fear, ye wingéd brood!

Of other woes I wot,—
Famine and tempests rude,

And the huntsman's cruel shot.

Nay, nay, for God is loving, And hath his birds in ward; Hunger and snare removing, The swallow he will guard.

I wish I knew what the little birds talk about. Do they understand each other? and do they really say any thing?

Can you doubt it, Caroline? They could not make all the noise they do, and mean nothing.

The sparrows say naughty things to each other in the park, when they dispute over the little crumbs of bread that people throw to them.

But, George, you must remember that they are hungry. It is cold and frosty; the ground is covered with snow; and the little crumbs are all the food they can find. They only dispute because they are eager to live. Can you blame them?

No; I should do the same thing if I were very hungry.

Have you never seen the little birds, George, when they were happy? when they talked together in sweet and gentle tones?

Yes. In the spring I have often watched the sparrows and the robins hopping about over the green grass, among the white daisies.

They are busy picking up the little bits of straw to build their nests in the great trees. Do they dispute then?

No, indeed. I saw two little sparrows yesterday; I do not know what they were talking about, but they seemed very happy and were chirping continually. One of them was hopping about, picking up all the bits of straw, feathers, and cotton it could find.

And where was the other?

On the tree, near its nest. After a while the first sparrow flew to the tree, and they went together into their little house, talking and chattering. What do you suppose they said to each other?

I cannot answer that question. Except themselves, God only is able to understand them. I suppose they were talking of their love for each other; of their nest, and the little ones that would soon be in it. Their little heads were full of cheerful thoughts; and they worked happily together, making a nice warm nest.

The mother is very happy when her little ones come.

Yes, indeed. Those are joyful days. The sparrow sits on her nest, keeping her eggs warm day and night, happy in thoughts of the future.

What does she think about?

Of the moment when she will hear the first cries of her little brood, the tender call to her naternal heart; when she shall see their wee heads peeping over the nest, and hear their sweet voices calling, — "Mamma, dear mamma, give us food, and cover us with your wings, for we are cold." Then how she watches the little feathers as they commence to grow and clothe her little ones. In the mother's eye, they are

the most beautiful feathers in the world; and she is sure her children are the prettiest in the park.

The father of the little birds is happy too, while the eggs are in the nest; is he not?

Yes, my dear; he is full of joy, and sings his happiness with all his heart. A celebrated poet has put into words the song of the nightingale, a bird famous throughout the world. As the nightingale is perched on a branch, it watches its dear mate in the nest, and thinks of the little ones that he will soon see flying among the leaves. His sweet thoughts inspire the song which he sings through the long still night.

THE NIGHTINGALES.

Sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep, my dearest dear!

My dear! My dear!
All fair, and all sincere;
And brooding warm
With loving form,
Keep, dearest dear,
Our babes from harm,

Our pretty, pretty, pretty, pretty, pretty, So pretty, so pretty, so pretty, Babes from harm.

My dear,
My dearest dear,
To love alone,

To love they owe their being here,
And to thy care, their joys, my own.
Sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep, my dearest
dear,

Love is watching o'er thee here, Love sincere, My love, my dearest dear.

Have you ever heard a nightingale sing? Yes, my boy; very often in France and Italy. Does it sing of the groves and the flowers?

It sings of nature in all its beauty. It sings the silence of the evening, and the soft ray of sunlight in early morn. It is the bird of the twilight. When its powerful voice mounts on high, singing the praises of God, all the other birds listen in silence.

Do they understand what it sings?

I believe so, my dears; and to me the life of a little bird is full of poetry.

When we are grown up, we will go to France and Italy; then we shall hear the nightingale.

I hope you may have that pleasure.

And we will go into the fields, and listen to the other bird that sings so finely.

What one do you mean, Alice?

Have you never heard it? My mamma says she likes it almost as well as the nightingale. It is the lark, the bird of the fields. It does not live in the groves or the meadows; it hides its

nest in the grain, and sings in the air; it flies almost up to heaven. Mamma has seen it flying high in the air, round and round in little circles, singing constantly.

Yes, dear child; we do not know how high it flies. For a long time we see it above our heads; then it mounts higher and higher, until it becomes invisible. We still hear its voice full of joy and sweetness, as it sings hymns of praise to the Creator. Then it returns slowly to the earth, singing, singing, always singing.

My dear children, this is our last lesson. Come here, and give me your hands in the way you gave them to me the first day we met. Do not cry, little Grace; another year, I hope we may continue the lessons that have become so dear to us. Good-by, my little ones; remember our cosey little chats until we meet again.







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